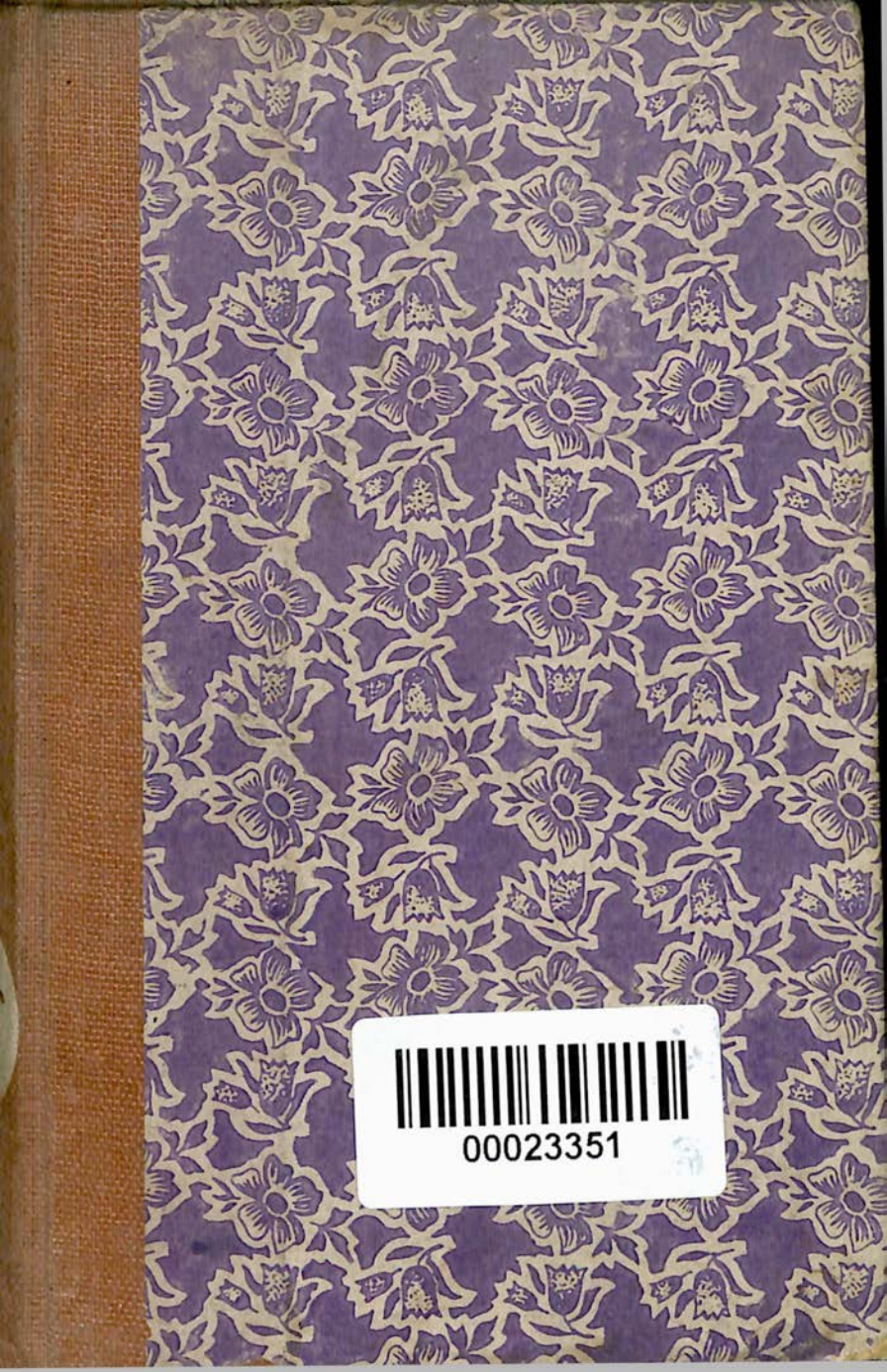
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JEANNE D'ARC

Après le tableau de la Princesse Marie d'Orléans

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF

JEANNE D'ARC,

CALLED *THE MAID.*

BY

HARRIET PARR,

AUTHOR OF "IN THE SILVER AGE," ETC.

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"The nobleness of life depends on its consistency,—clearness of purpose,—quiet and ceaseless energy."

JOHN RUSKIN—*Ethics of the Dust.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 65 CORNHILL.
1866.

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"Man, when he resteth and assureth himselfe, upon divine Protection, and Favour, gathereth a Force and Faith; which Humane Nature, in it selfe, could not obtaine."

LORD BACON—*Essayes of Atheisme.*

[*The right of translation is reserved.*]

PREFACE.

ALL the known authentic documents concerning Jeanne d'Arc have been collected and published by the Society of the History of France, in five volumes, demy octavo, and it is from these original sources that the present Life of the Maid has been drawn. References in the course of the narrative would have been tediously minute and frequent, and I have therefore chosen to give instead a prefatory statement of what these original authorities are; premising that an excellent analytical table at the close of the fifth volume makes the verification of any passage sufficiently easy.

Vol. I. contains the *Procès de Condamnation*, in which Jeanne d'Arc's interrogatories furnish an outline of the leading events of her life, and the truest view of her personal character, with her own account of the impulses that moved her to undertake the deliverance of her country. This trial, studiously got up to dishonour her memory, remains still her fullest clearance, and the strongest condemnation of her iniquitous judges.

Vols. II. and III. contain the *Procès de Réhabilitation*, made by order of Pope Calixtus III., twenty-five years after Jeanne's death. The capital portions are the testimony on oath of a legion of witnesses to her life and conversation from her birth to her death. These witnesses are of all ranks and conditions: peasants of Domremy and their wives, the playmates of her childhood; princes, nobles, and knights, her companions-in-arms; her chaplain, and personal attendants in camp and at court; matrons, and citizens of Orleans; and citizens

and ecclesiastics of Rouen and Paris, many of whom assisted at her trial.

Vol. IV. consists of the portions of all the chronicles of the century which give any account of the Maid, with introductions estimating the value and trustworthiness of each old author.

Vol. V. consists of various short pieces, such as letters, acts of nobility, and extracts from public books of accounts. It concludes with a history of the manuscripts from which the two trials have been printed. The whole work is elucidated with biographical and editorial notes; and to crown his labours, the editor, Mons. Jules Quicherat, has added a volume of critical essays on the difficult and disputed points of Jeanne's history, which clear away many errors and fables grafted upon it by secondary writers.

For historical narrative necessary to give the story coherence, I have been occasionally indebted to other sources. Some familiar tales will be missed in these volumes, and some traits will be found in the character of the

Maid which a sentimental tenderness has commonly slurred over, regarding them, perhaps, as blemishes; for my endeavour has been to represent her true to nature and to evidence, sure that the truth of a nature so loyal, religious, and pure is more touching with its rudenesses and its shadows upon it, than with any glosses overlaying them, or any evasions striving to deny them.

SHANKLYN, April 1866.

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I.

FRANCE DURING THE CHILDHOOD OF THE MAID.

"La France fut comme la mer où chacun a tant de seigneurie comme il a de force."—ALAIN CHARTIER.

ON the night of the Epiphany, 1412, there was born to Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle Rommée, a peasant-pair of Domremy, a village near Vaucouleurs, on the borders of Lorraine, a second daughter and fifth child, who was baptized at the parish church by the curé, Jean Minet, as Joanetta or Jeanne.

France was at that hour wasted by nearly a century of sorrows. Since 1337 there had been war, almost perpetually renewed, with England; but its present and worst calamities were the work of

its own faithless, turbulent princes, and of a woman —the wicked Queen Isabeau of Bavaria.

Isabeau had come into it, a princess of fourteen, to be married to Charles VI., a prince who, at four-and-twenty, had exhausted every emotion, and had undermined his strength by every excess. In 1392, a sudden shock of terror drove him into a fit of frenzy. His life and reign had to continue for yet nearly thirty years longer—years, for the most part, darkened and degraded, but with lucid intervals, during which sons and daughters were born to him; and the people, mindful of his amiable qualities, and touched by his sufferings and gentle resignation, gave him the surname of the *Well-beloved*. He sank, at last; after repeated attacks of mania, into hopeless imbecility, and his wife, charged with the care of his person, treated him and his children with such barbarous neglect, while indulging a licentious caprice for his brother, Louis, Duke of Orleans, that the people of Paris cried out on her for shame, as more cruel than a she-wolf.

Philip the Hardy, Duke of Burgundy, the first prince of the blood, held the reins of government as regent until his death in 1404, when a violent struggle for power ensued between his son, John the Fearless, and Louis of Orleans. The University of Paris, always a powerful corporation, declared for Burgundy, and added the weight of its authority to the popular favour which the duke assiduously

courted. The queen maintained the rights of Orleans, and through her influence, he contrived to rule supreme for nearly three years, when he was cut short by the hired daggers of his rival. He perished unpitied; for his government had been as oppressive as his life was vicious. Burgundy, after one brief spasm of terror, boasted of his crime, and Jean Petit, a doctor of the University, preached a sermon, exalting it into a noble deed, for which the author deserved to be recompensed like the archangel Michael for killing the devil.

The demented king was compelled to grant letters of pardon to the powerful assassin of his brother, but the children of the murdered man vowed vengeance against his murderer. Then began the bloody contests of Burgundy, and Armagnac—Armagnac, the father-in-law of Orleans' son, and chosen leader of the Orleans faction. The people prayed God to send their princes the spirit of peace,—but no peace ensued. Instead, there appeared all the miseries that wait on civil war—rapine and murder, waste, want, and utter desolation. When this quarrel had run its course for some seven years, the king of England, Henry V., discerned that the times were favourable for pushing the ancient claim of the Plantagenets to the crown of France. The kingdom was visibly going to perdition for want of a head. He landed before Harfleur, besieged, and took it; fought and won the famous battle of Agin-

court, destroyed the French army, and returned home through Calais to recruit his strength for fresh campaigns; carrying with him as prisoners the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, and a crowd of nobles and knights besides.

The Duke of Burgundy had stood aloof from this war. It was his enemies, the Armagnacs, who were so terribly beaten. But the Armagnacs were still the stronger. They held possession of Paris, of the king, and of his third son, Charles, now by the death of his two elder brothers in swift succession, become Dauphin and heir of France. The capital was miserably distressed; scarcity and sickness prevailed in it. The people blamed Armagnac for all. Burgundy came forward, the ostentatious helper of the poor, entered into a league with the queen, procured her escape from Tours, whither she had been exiled by the king for her disorders, declared her regent of the kingdom, established a court and parliament at Troyes, and, in her name, forbade the cities any longer to pay their taxes to the collectors of Armagnac.

Then he negotiated a treaty of neutrality with the English king. The Dukes of Anjou and Brittany followed his lead. Armagnac became poor, and presently helpless. His unpaid partisans abandoned him; Paris, which hated, betrayed him. L'Isle-Adam, a great captain in Burgundy's interest, was admitted into the city by night, with a force

of nine hundred men-at-arms. The old adherents of the Burgundian faction joined him, and a bloody massacre ensued, in which the Count of Armagnac, several prelates and magistrates, and sixteen hundred of their party, perished. A brave knight, Tanneguy du Châtel, contrived to save the young dauphin, and to escape with him beyond the Loire, whither many members of the parliament, and such of the Armagnacs as did not fall under the knife of the assassins, followed.

Through streets red and reeking with slaughter, the Queen-regent and Burgundy entered Paris in triumph. The populace welcomed the duke as the bringer of peace, plenty, prosperity—all the good things that they lacked. But he seemed rather to have brought them plague, pestilence, and famine. The miseries of the city increased fourfold. Children cried in the streets for hunger, dropping and dying like flies. Men and women, fifty thousand and over, were smitten within the walls. Wolves prowled in the environs, and at night came in and preyed on the unburied bodies of the dead. Men grew desperate in their wretchedness, and lived like beasts. "Come," said they, "let us put ourselves into the devil's hands, and do the worst we can!"

The king of England had returned to Normandy: had taken Falaise, Saint-Lo, Coutances, and Evreux. In 1419, Rouen fell after a dreadful

siege, and then the whole province submitted to him. Burgundy, bearing the responsibility of government, begged hard for peace. "I will grant you peace," said Henry, "on these terms: Give me the Princess Katherine, King Charles's daughter, for my wife; and as her dower, Normandy, which I hold, Guienne, Brittany, Anjou, and Touraine."

John the Fearless protested that much as he desired peace, he could not buy it at the price of half the kingdom of France. He tried to call a truce with the Armagnacs, reminding them that he and they were all of one kin, and nearer each to the other than either to the English prince. He preached that civil strife should cease when foreign invasion began and the national independence was put in peril. The dauphin vouchsafed him a meeting; but instead of producing a good understanding, it only inflamed the rancour and rivalry of their partisans. Burgundy fell back on the English alliance; and in fear lest he should deliver up the kingdom to Henry, some of the violent men who governed the dauphin, invited the duke to a second interview on the bridge of Montereau, and when he came, fell upon him with swords and daggers and killed him.

This crime gave the King of England the dominion of France. The dauphin was only seventeen, and the guilt of it could not be fairly charged upon him; but amongst the assassins was Tan-

neguy du Châtel, the knight who had saved his life during the massacre of the Armagnacs in Paris, and the young prince refused to give him or any of his accomplices up to justice. He thus adopted their deed, and on his head fell the punishment of it. Philip the Good, son and successor of the murdered Burgundy, swore a great revenge against the dauphin, and threw himself entirely into Henry's interests; carrying Paris and all the northern parts of France with him. On the 21st of May 1420, a treaty was concluded at Troyes, between Philip, his English ally, and the queen, by which Charles was disinherited. Isabeau consented to disown her son, and to espouse her daughter Katherine to Henry, the government being confided to him at once, and the crown and sovereignty of France being vested in him and his heirs for ever by the treasonable and ignominious compact.

The nation, however, refused to confirm the treaty, and Henry encountered a vigorous resistance when he began to take possession of his new sovereignty. He carried his young wife to be crowned in England, and leaving her at Windsor pregnant, returned to push his work of subjugation. While besieging Meaux, news was brought him that Katherine had been delivered of a son. Within a few months, death arrested the victorious Plantagenet in mid-career. Seven weeks later, the

forlorn and imbecile Charles was gathered to his fathers at Saint-Denis. Over his grave was proclaimed the baby-son of Katherine: "Henry, by the grace of God, king of France and England!" About the same time, at Méhun-sur-Yèvre in Berry, a few French knights raised the royal standard, and proclaimed the dauphin: "Charles, seventh of the name, by the grace of God, king of France."

The infant Henry was acknowledged as sovereign of France under the regency of his uncle, John, Duke of Bedford, by the Parliament and University of Paris, by the queen, and by Philip of Burgundy. Paris, the Isle-of-France, Picardy, Artois, Flanders, Champagne, and Normandy—that is, nearly all the country north of the Loire, and Guienne to the south of it—were in his obedience.

The authority of Charles, now a prince of nineteen, graceful and gracious, pleasure-loving, indolent, reserved, wavering, half-couraged, was recognised in Touraine, Berry, Orleanais, Bourbonnais, Auvergne, Languedoc, Lyonnais, and Dauphiné.

Two great defeats from the English marked the beginning of the reign of Charles VII.; the first at Cravant in 1423, the second at Verneuil in 1424. These disasters crushed his hopes in the north. He summoned the loyal members of the Parliament and University to Poictiers, and established there the centre of his government. From that

day, for four years onward, he almost abandoned the quarrel of France; and during those four years of torpor, she declined within a pace of her ruin.

The war for national independence languished, while thousands of men whom it had brought to want, formed themselves into Free Companies, and lived by preying on English and Burgundian territory when they could, and when they could not, on French territory, until whole districts became wilderness, woods grew up in fruitful fields, and in hundreds of villages there remained no inhabitant.

The crimes perpetrated by these lawless partisans in Charles's name made him a terror to the people, and were a grief and terror to himself. The English regent pursued them with rigour, chased them out of the provinces in his subjection, and succeeded in establishing a sort of order, under which once more there was sowing and reaping, and going to and fro in quiet, and life in the hamlets. But in the provinces of Charles, wasted by them worse and worse, there was complete anarchy. Edict after edict he published against them in vain. They, the destroyers, the ravagers; were the irrepressible wild seed of national life, the scattered elements of strength and hope, out of which were by and by to spring national union and freedom. Let who might sit down in bonds patiently, they never would. They were let loose, like a manifold scourge, to lash the fallen

people on their feet, and madden them to fresh struggles, and in the dreadful chaos and confusion a new generation was bred, which hated and cursed the English as the one sole cause of the calamities and anguish of France.

The regent Bedford was a great captain and a great statesman, but the English prince was an alien without right, and he could command for him only the grudging obedience of fear and weakness, or the servile, distrustful support of partisans whose interests were permanently at variance with a foreign supremacy. Except in Normandy, the English had not struck root at all. They were too few to impregnate the race with their prejudices or their affections; and the race was too numerous and too virile to be held long under a military domination. Burgundy was the real master in Paris and the parts adjacent. Without Burgundy, Bedford could not have kept his foothold there a day; and Burgundy reminded the regent again and again that he knew it.

From this it came that Charles—inert, unstable, frivolous as he was—had yet a moral force that Henry lacked. Though he had yielded to the pressure of circumstances, and had learnt to bear his adversity with something more than resignation; though he hid himself from his forlorn people, and lived indolently and easily, now in one pleasant castle and now in another, surrounded by a

gay, light-hearted little court, he was still the prince of the House of France, the heir of the old blood, to whom all the loyal of the nation—and the disloyal, too, when the English goad pricked them—looked for ultimate rest and peace.

Far and wide were dispersed the sources whose streams were to rush together, and carry him on until all France hailed him her king, *Charles the Victorious;* but they were swelling out of earth at many points. In that valley of the Meuse where Domremy lay, separated by eighty leagues of enemy's country from the sunny plains of the Loire, a few small towns, a handful of soldiers, and some hundreds only of poor peasant people, were holding his and theirs, obstinately, faithfully, against the English and Burgundian power; and in the midst of them, fired by their courage and patriotism, was being matured a girl, a generous soul, who was to bring together all these dispersed forces, to speed them on for the deliverance of France, and then to die—its Saint, its Martyr, its Sacrifice—the perpetual memorial of the guilt of a great nation divided against itself.

II.

THE INSPIRATION.

THERE was an ancient prophecy revived and current at this epoch throughout France, which proclaimed that the kingdom, brought to desolation by a woman, should be restored by a daughter of the people. In the country where Jeanne d'Arc was born—a fertile country, abounding in rivers, pasturage, and woods—the popular version of it was that France should be restored by a maid from the marches of Lorraine—a maid who should come out of the hoary Druidical forest that lay only half a league or so from Domremy, visible from the door of her father's cottage.

Jeanne knew this tradition of her village, where the inhabitants kept up old-world superstitions and observances with persevering fidelity to the practice of their forefathers. Domremy lay nestled at

the foot of a hill, on the left bank of the river Meuse. At a short distance from it, like an advanced guard of the forest beyond, stood a vast, spreading beech of immemorial age, the branches grown round, and giving a shelter like a roof. The gossips said it was once fairy-haunted, and called it the *Beautiful May*, the Tree of the Elf-Ladies. Almost under its shadow gushed a spring, to which went the fever-sick for healing; and under it, too, a whisper ran that *mandragora* grew—mandragora, to charm away poverty and medicine sorrow.

The Beautiful May belonged to the knight Pierre de Bourlemont, lord of the manor of Domremy, whose castle was not far from it. Once or twice, in the sunny months of the year, when the tree was in its glory, "fair as lilies, wide arching, its silken-leaved boughs sweeping the earth," the ladies of his family would assemble the young folks of the hamlet there, and give them a regale of white bread and wine. On May-morning all the children ran thither by troops, pillaging the meadows as they went, to make a mannikin of foliage and flowers; and on a certain Sunday, called the Sunday of the Fountains, they brought little cakes which their mothers had baked for them overnight, and ate them there, and drank of the spring, fulfilling an ancient custom, the significance of which was long since forgotten. On the eve of the Ascension, the parish priest, in making the annual

Procession of the Cross through the fields, came under the tree, bearing the sacred symbol, and chanting the gospel. He visited the spring there, and all the other springs of the village, and it was an article of popular belief that since the performance of this divine ceremony, the fairies had ceased to haunt the Beautiful May. The children were therefore not afraid to haunt it, and on every high-day and holiday while there were flowers in the fields, they met there, and wove garlands to hang on its branches. When they had made it gay, they danced round it, singing in chorus till evening came, when they went sleepily home, some carrying off their wreaths, some leaving them to deck its green solemnity until the blossoms withered and died. Jeanne brought her cakes, tressed her garlands, danced, sang, and was happy with the rest—her pet companions being her sister, and two tiny maidens younger than herself, called Haumette and Mangète.

She had learnt her *Credo*, her *Pater Noster*, and *Ave Maria*, at her mother's knee, and as a child, she went with other children into the fields to keep the sheep. She had a high spirit and warm temper, but she was a serious, religious, loving little soul. The curé used to say she had not her equal in the parish. Her ardour, energy, and physical strength made her delight in active sports. She was leader in every race and game—so fleet of foot and endur-

ing, that not one of her playmates could match her. To this robust force she united perceptions of the most acute sensibility. Violent exertion, instead of jading her, produced a wild excitement, which shone in her countenance, making her look like a creature possessed. One day in the meadow by the river, running races with her comrades, she outstript them all so fast and far, that her feet seemed hardly to touch the grass.

"Jeanne, Jeanne, thou art flying, thou art flying!" shouted they, giving up the contest.

Jeanne stopped, out of breath and exultant, listened an instant towards the village, then saying suddenly, "I hear my mother call me home!" rushed away down the fields.

When she reached the cottage, her mother asked her why she had left her sheep.

"Did you not call me?" said Jeanne; "I heard a *voice*."

"It was not mine, child. Go back to the field."

Jeanne went, fancying she heard the voice in the air still.

Her moods were not always so joyous. Sometimes in the long days, tending her flock under the wood, she would go apart from all her companions and sit alone, her rapt gaze on the sky, her face as of one who communes with her own thoughts, and with God. She loved to listen to the murmur of the leaves, to the long, solemn whispering of the

wind in the branches; but especially she loved the sweet, measured cadence of bells; and when complines rang at the church of Domremy, at the church of Greux, a hamlet adjoining, or at the more distant chapel of Saint Mary of Bermont, on the road to Neufchâteau, she would make a devout reverence, kneel down, clasp her hands, and say her prayers. She was full of patience and tender trustiness; and during these solitary vigils, she tamed wild birds to come at her call, to eat crumbs out of her bosom, and be her friends.

It was not until the autumn of 1424, after the defeat of the loyal French and their Scottish allies at Verneuil, that the troubles of the war spread into the distant valley of the Meuse where Domremy lay. But from that time it had no assured peace. Now a company of English appeared, and now a troop of Burgundy's men, and wherever they passed was bloodshed and weeping. Pierre de Bourlemont and his village held stoutly for the cause of Charles VII. and Armagnac. Two leagues away was the village of Marcey—furiously Burgundian. The lads of the rival hamlets emulated their elders, and never met but they fought. Many a time Jeanne saw her brothers, Jacquemin, Jean, and Pierre, return beaten and bleeding from an encounter with their unfriendly neighbours, and the sight fired her passionate heart with helpless rage. Every day life became more disturbed and

perilous upon the frontier towards Champagne. The children no longer led their sheep to pasture in the open fields. For fear of the soldiers, the flocks and herds were driven into a fortified camp by the river, called the Island, and Jeanne kept at home, learning to spin and sew, and to do woman's work with her mother and sister in the house.

Hard by was the church, the door open every day and all day long. Jeanne often stole in alone to dream and pray. Her books were the crucifix and pictures there; her learning the legends of the saints, the stories of the blessed martyrs, bits of old history and fable told over the wheel or by the winter fire. Now and then came to Domremy a mendicant friar, travel-stained and tired, seeking a night's rest and a meal, recounting the bitter distresses he had witnessed on his journeyings, opening the Gospels, his one treasure, proclaiming the Good News of God, the Great Salvation, the love and helpfulness of Christ to helpless men. In the pious households of the village he was always welcome, and nowhere more welcome than under the roof of Jacques d'A The missionary-monk scattered the good seed, and went on his way. In Jeanne's heart it struck deep root, and sprang up with irrepressible vigour amidst the tangle of simple truth and pious tradition which formed the faith of the primitive society in which she was bred. Gifted with a rare intelligence, with an imagination pure,

fervent, and elevated, she began early to live a second life within her laborious actual life—a life more real and absorbing, the life of her soul, which by great powers and great sufferings was to be annealed for a great destiny.

The calamities of the external world were already giving form and substance to her vague, long thoughts. The sorrows of her own people, compassion for *all* the desolated people of France; compassion for the young prince, dispossessed of his inheritance, and disowned by his cruel mother, tinted her waking dreams—not sad-colour for mourning, but green for hope and helpfulness.

A maid from the marches of Lorraine was to save France—never in more need of saving! She mused over the prophecy in whispers to herself. *Would God call her? Would God intrust the glorious task to her?* Before her birth her mother had dreamed that she was about to bring forth a warrior! Jeanne let her imagination glow into visions of self-devotion, of mighty deeds of deliverance, until she felt strong to do and suffer—stirred by that divine pity which overcomes doubt, passes by tears, and takes work in hand, looking for no rest and no wage but the final salvation promised to every good and faithful servant of God.

The thought that the Almighty would give her the mission took possession of Jeanne—grew into a vivid hope—ripened into a daring expectation.

Praying in the church, spinning in the quiet house, wandering in the fields, the shadowy wood, the sunny garden, she nourished it, and cherished it, and fed her soul upon it. She kept her conscience clean, she made her weekly pilgrimages to the shrine of St Mary at Bermont, her offerings to her dearest saints, St Katherine the Virgin, St Margaret, armed with the cross, victorious over the Dragon. The mediæval sentiment of sanctity and holiness pervaded her whole nature. She fasted often, and fasted long. Absorbed and exalted in spirit, mysterious sounds thrilled often in her ears; and one hot summer noon, when she was thirteen years old, being in the garden, meditative and alone, suddenly a great light broke upon her, and she heard a *voice* speaking out of it, which answered her secret aspirations, saying: *Jeanne, be thou a good child, and frequent at church; for the King of heaven hath chosen thee to restore France.* Smitten with awe and terror, she fell on her knees, and made a vow of virginity to keep so long as it should please God—that vow which the devout men and women of her time believed to be of all services the most holy, of all sacrifices the most acceptable to Heaven.

From that hour Jeanne's hallucinations were of frequent recurrence, but she kept them secret as her thoughts. She conceived that God had given her a charge, and with it a *counsel* to help her. She

had an intense faith, an invincible trust in His goodness, and she surrendered to Him her whole mind,—will, emotions, understanding; praying that He would teach her by the *voice* what she ought to do.

The result appeared in her daily practice. She was constant at mass, at confession, at communion. At home she lived obedient, affectionate, submissive. She spun diligently, sewed industriously; took her turn to drive the cattle to the Island; in the season went out to field-work with her brothers —ploughing, hoeing, reaping—did all her bounden duties well. She was of a contemplative character, and her thoughts were aspirations after things high and full of perplexity; but her good was active and helpful, natural, easy, and for every-day service. No forlorn wayfarer came through Domremy that she did not give him rest and food, or some little alms from her own poverty. Was a child sick, its mother knew where to find a tender nurse to aid her. Gerard d'Epinal and his wife chose her to be god-mother to their first baby, Nicolas. Haumette and Mangète sought her to spin with them, because she was such good and pleasant company. She was not given to much talk, but when she spoke, she expressed herself vividly; sometimes subtilely, and not seldom with a touch of that half-sarcastic, half-melancholy humour which belongs to large, far-sighted minds. All

the legends, fables, and fancies of her country were familiar to her, and her memory was stored with proverbs, the well-worn, current wisdom of the unlearned. In her village she passed for a prudent, industrious girl of blameless behaviour, God-fearing and charitable, a daughter to be a blessing to her parents' house.

Two or three years passed over Jeanne's head without any marked incident. She sprang up into a fine intrepid figure of a girl, handsome, indefatigable, and strong. She was above the common height of women, and her frame was magnificent. To a perfect symmetry of proportion she united an extraordinary vigour, agility, and gracefulness; but at sixteen she was immature, undeveloped, much younger of her age than girls of active life are wont to be. Her health was strong, but she had begun to be very restless and troubled. Signs, which betrayed some strange and powerful influence at work upon her, continually crept out. She manifested an eager curiosity to learn all that concerned the war, the state of the people, and of the king. She avowed a keen repugnance for the Burgundians; and of one man in the village who adhered to that party, she said that it would not have grieved her if his head had been taken off—always with the proviso, that it was agreeable to God. As for the English, their name was like a curse in

her ears—synonymous with all the calamities of the people, all the wrongs of the king; and her entire nature, body, soul, and spirit, rose insurgent against them with vehement repulsion and defiance.

When a party of men-at-arms marched through Domremy, Jeanne watched them with more than a common girlish admiration; and her father, an austerely pious man, who loved her most fondly, fearing he knew not what, kept her in stern subjection. Her mother observed her with wistful, tender anxiety. There seemed to be no savour left for her in the dull village life. If Haumette and Mangète beguiled her now and then to the Beautiful May, they could not make her dance. She sat under the broad green shadow, and sang as she wove her flowery crowns; but instead of leaving them to deck the tree, she carried them to the church, an offering to the blessed Mary and her saints. Her parents would fain have married her, in the hope that then her restlessness would disappear, and that she would settle down into a good wife and happy mother of children, like any ordinary woman. They pressed a lover upon her—some young man of their village—but Jeanne refused to hear him. She had no inclination to marry, and she had her vow to keep.

Meanwhile, the troubles that were in France increased. The English were pushing their conquests southwards and eastwards. In the spring

of 1428, an army of English and Burgundians was despatched by the regent Bedford, to reduce the town and castle of Vaucouleurs which was held for Charles VII. by Robert de Baudricourt. One day the enemy entered Domremy. The inhabitants fled; some to the forest, some to distant towns for shelter. Jeanne's parents fled to Neufchâteau with their sons and daughters, and took refuge at an inn kept by a decent woman, called *La Rousse*, where they remained about a fortnight.

These hard times brought the peasants into rude company. Soldiers and their wild partners frequented the hostelry. Jeanne had to take her part in serving the house, and in driving the cattle to pasture beyond the walls. She told Gerard d'Epinal, who met her in the town, that she was sick of being there, and longed to go back to Domremy. She had various good reasons for disliking Neufchâteau, not the least of them being the presence of the young man who sought her in marriage. She was very desirable as a wife. Under a thick mass of rich, dark hair, she had a face that changed, according to her mood, from the most joyous brightness to a tender melancholy. She was, moreover, sweet-voiced, affectionate, docile, and industrious. Except in this matter of marriage, she had never failed in due submission to her parents; and her unwelcome suitor, reluctant to be lightly said nay by her, when they were on his side, resorted to the

extreme measure of citing her before the ecclesiastical court at Toul, to answer why she refused obedience to them, and her hand to himself—professing that she had pledged him her word. Jeanne was sworn to tell the judge the truth, and having satisfied him that she was averse to marriage, and had really made the young man no promise, he refused to lay any commands on her, and she was suffered to go her own way—as much to her parents' disappointment as to her persevering lover's discomfiture.

At Neufchâteau there was a house of Franciscan monks—that mendicant order of pious, laborious, devoted men, of whom, now and then, a stray brother had found his way to Domremy. Jeanne entertained always a deep veneration and gratitude for them. Twice she went to confession in their church, and to prayers with the poor who met at its altar. She loved their teaching. What she heard from their faithful lips did not glide over her mind as water over glass, but sunk in. Her *voices* comforted and encouraged her often in after-days with the good counsel and divine promises of love and succour which the poor friars read out of their book of the Holy Gospels. She took them as they were written, and made them her own. Not by weary seeking high or low did she realise the Divine Presence, but by *trusting*. Never to be left, never forsaken! Never to ask and go unanswered!

—never to weep and go uncomforted! To have labour and sorrow in the world, but to be brought safe at last out of every tribulation, and set in the light of God's glorious peace for ever! This was her faith, her sure and steadfast hope.

The English and Burgundian force sent to reduce Vaucouleurs failed of its object, and was compelled to retire into Champagne. Then the fugitive inhabitants of Domremy returned to their village, Jacques d'Arc, his wife and children, amongst the rest. They found the church pillaged and burnt, their homesteads destroyed, everything wantonly wasted that could not be carried off. This was a picture in little of what whole provinces in France were groaning under. The sight of it quickened Jeanne's wrathful indignation against the English, and intensified her yearning pity for the prince and people over whom they rode so cruelly triumphant.

From that day the *voice* recited to her incessantly the misery that was in France. The bells, the forest, the fountain, re-echoed the story. Then bright shadows began to pass before her eyes, and one day, out upon the hills alone, again that mysterious light burst over her, and now a vision of angels appeared in the glory. From the grandest of the phantom host sounded the familiar *voice*. *Why dost thou delay? God has great pity on His people of France. The time is come that thou must go to their deliverance.* Jeanne's first impulse was

to shrink from the mission she had so ardently desired. She was afraid; she wept; she pleaded that she was but a girl, and knew nothing of war. The *voice* answered her, *What God bids thee, do without fear. St Katherine and St Margaret will teach and help thee.* As the vision faded, she bowed her face with tears upon the earth. Whose was this voice that spoke to her from God? She believed it was the voice of St Michael, the Archangel of Battles, and that two of the sweet crowned faces in the glory were those of her appointed guardian saints.

Another day, when she had taken refuge from a storm in the little chapel at Bermont, she fell into a deep sleep, and in a dream, she heard the command reiterated, that she must leave all, and go to the succour of the king and kingdom of France.

The restlessness that had already given her father and mother so much uneasiness and disquiet increased upon her. She felt as if she could no longer abide where she was. Her agitation communicated itself to them. One morning her mother said to her, "Jeanne, thy father dreamt last night that thou wert leaving us to go away with the men-at-arms. I heard him tell thy brothers if he believed that could happen to thee which he dreamed, he would rather see thee drowned—nay, that he would rather drown thee with his own hands."

Jeanne did not need this assurance to tell

her that she would never go into France with her parents' good-will; but above obedience to father and mother, she had already begun to place honour for the direct commission her *voices* had brought her from God. How to set about performing it was now her sole obstacle. An appeal to Robert de Baudricourt, governor of Vaucouleurs, was suggested to her by the *voice* as the best step to be taken; and she begged her uncle, Durant Laxart, a peasant-proprietor of Burey-le-Petit, a village between Domremy and Vaucouleurs, to conduct her to him, unknown to her father. Her uncle came over to see her parents, and they gave her leave to return with him to Burey-le-Petit, to guide and serve his house for a few weeks during the lying-in of his wife. She remained there until over mid-summer, tending the cattle and doing women's work in the house with all willingness and diligence; and while there, one day about the Feast of the Ascension, he took her to Vaucouleurs, and obtained for her an interview with Robert de Baudricourt. Amongst others present at it, were Bertrand de Poulangy and Albert d'Ourches, two gentlemen of the neighbourhood, who knew Jeanne well as the daughter of honest, labouring folk, and had often seen her driving her father's cattle and horses to pasture.

When Jeanne presented herself before the governor—a practical soldier and no mystic—he saw in

her only a tall, beautiful, peasant girl, poorly clad in a red dress, who gravely informed him that she had received, by a *voice*, a command from her Lord to go into France, to make war upon its enemies and to carry the Dauphin for his coronation to Rheims. "And send him word," said she, "not to give the English battle until God vouchsafes him a succour, which he shall have before next Lent be out. The kingdom of France is not his, but my Lord's; nevertheless, my Lord wills that he shall be king, and hold the kingdom in trust. In spite of his enemies he shall be king, and it is I who am to bring him to his crown."

Baudricourt asked her who was her Lord.

"The King of heaven," replied Jeanne.

The governor laughed, advised her uncle to box her ears, and send her back to her father. He refused to give her any help, countenance, or encouragement whatever; and thus rebuffed, she went back to Burey-le-Petit, delayed, but by no means daunted or disheartened. Indeed, so impetuous was she to begin her mission, that she possessed herself of some of her uncle's clothes, put them on, and set out to walk to Chinon. But her heart and courage were hardly yet matured for her task. She had gone but a little way when she repented, and returned home again to Domremy, to wear through a few more painful months of internal conflict and struggle.

III.

THE ADIEU.

THE calamities of France still increased and extended. In June, while Jeanne d'Arc was at Burey-le-Petit, the famous Earl of Salisbury landed at Calais with six thousand good English troops. The regent Bedford draughted four thousand more out of the garrisons of Normandy, and with this army, setting his face towards the south, the earl captured in rapid succession the towns of Nogent-le-roi, Jergeau, Yenville, Meun-sur-Loire, and Beaugency, drawing gradually nearer and nearer to Orleans, the key of Berry, Poitou, and Bourbonnais.

The Duke of Orleans, a prisoner in England since the fatal day of Agincourt, warned of what the English were preparing, wrote to Salisbury to beg that his lands and lordships which he was not free to defend, might be spared. He offered to pay for them a ransom of six thousand gold crowns,

and the earl pledged his word to save them as far as lay in his power. But his promise notwithstanding, early in October he marched through the Sologne country, south of the Loire, and on the 12th appeared before the walls of Orleans, having in his army the Earl of Suffolk, and his brother John de la Pole, Lord Scales, Lord Falconbridge, Lord Grey, Sir John Talbot, Sir William Glasdale, Sir Lancelot de Lisle, and several false French knights who adhered to the English king.

Upon the defence of Orleans hung the fortunes of France. The loyal part of the nation looked towards it as the stronghold where the independence of their ancient monarchy and the rights of their natural and lawful sovereign must be once for all asserted or for ever lost. Angers, Tours, and Bourges sent in supplies of food; Poitiers and Rochelle sent money; Languedoc, Auvergne, and Bourbonnais sent munitions of war. The garrison consisted of only five hundred men, but they were all seasoned soldiers, and the commander, Raoul de Gaucourt, was an experienced captain. The citizens enrolled themselves into thirty-four companies to maintain the thirty-four towers which girdled the walls; and every man within them, and every woman too, was prepared to stand by the place to the death.

The Portereau, a rich and splendid suburb on the south of the Loire, the extent of which made it in-

capable of defence, had been destroyed at the first note of danger, and the people had worked day and night since, at the construction of a rampart of wood and earth, to defend the entrance of the bridge at that end. The bridge crossed the river from the city gate, called the Bridge-gate, in a direct line for rather more than three-fourths of the way over, and then made a bend towards the east. The strong fortress of the Tournelles stood upon the bridge above the elbow, one stone arch and a drawbridge only connecting it with the opposite shore.

The rampart of the Portereau, which was designed to cover the drawbridge, was hardly finished, when the English army appeared, took possession of the ruined monastery of the Augustines, and of the river-bank as far as the church of Saint-Jean-le-Blanc, about half a mile from the city, where they established an outpost. Salisbury had not force enough to invest so great a place while it commanded a passage across the Loire, and he therefore began the siege by attacking the fortifications of the bridge from the south, leaving the Beauce country on the north still open. Several preliminary sallies and skirmishes took place, and on the 23d of October, an assault was made on the rampart of the Portereau. The women helped in its defence, bringing boiling oil and water, quick-lime, and hot ashes to shower upon the assailants; but after a desperate conflict, which lasted four hours, the besieged were

compelled to abandon it. They set it on fire as they retired, and aware that they could not long hold the Tournelles after the loss of the rampart, they cut an arch of the bridge in the rear of the fortress, about the middle of the river, where the piers rested on a little island, and threw up a solid rampart there, which they called the rampart of the Belle-Croix.

The Tournelles were taken by storm the next day, after a furious defence, conducted by De Gaucourt, and a famous knight of Rhodes, Nicole de Girème. Their fall, though anticipated, spread sorrow and consternation through the city; but on the very morrow of it, the courage of the people was reanimated by the arrival of the brave young Dunois, Bastard of Orleans,* the Marshal de Boussac, La Hire, and Poton de Saintrailles, two dashing Gascon soldiers, with eight hundred men-at-arms, archers, and cross-bowmen.

Salisbury perceived from this successful introduction of reinforcements that the siege might be indefinitely prolonged; and as the season was too far advanced for him to expect to reduce the place, if well defended, before the coming on of winter, he resolved to draw a line of forts round it, gradually to cut off communication with the loyal

* He was a son of the Duke Louis of Orleans, murdered by Burgundy in 1407. The county of Dunois, from which he took his title, was not conferred on him until 1439.

provinces, and so to reduce it by famine. With a view to deciding on the most favourable sites for these forts, he mounted with Sir William Glasdale into the upper story of the Tournelles, whence they could survey Orleans and a considerable part of its environs. They were standing together at a window, and the knight was saying to the earl: "My lord, look at your city; you can see it well from hence;" when a ball, fired at a venture by a child from the tower of Nôtre Dame, struck Salisbury in the face, and struck him down, inflicting a ghastly wound. He was carried to Meun-sur-Loire to be out of the noise of the camp, and there, three days after, he died.

Messengers were despatched with all speed to the regent Bedford, to announce this great disaster for the English party. Salisbury was the most renowned in arms, and the most dreaded by the French of all their commanders. Some of the troops were withdrawn to Meun and Beaugency; only Glasdale being left with five hundred combatants, to maintain the Tournelles, and another great bastile which the English had raised on the ruins of the church and monastery of the Augustines. During November the siege operations were almost suspended; but the citizens, in anticipation that they would presently be renewed on the side of the Beauce, toiled hard at burning and beating down their faubourgs on the north, east, and west,

as they had already burned and beaten down those towards the south.

On the 1st of December, the Earl of Suffolk, Sir John Talbot, and several other lords and knights, returned to the Tournelles, and shortly after large reinforcements of English, Burgundian, and Norman soldiers appeared in the Beauce, before St Laurent. It was now hard winter weather, and Suffolk, upon whom the chief command had devolved since Salisbury's death, proceeded to carry out his plans, by throwing up strong fortresses at intervals, for the purpose of investing the city. Sir William Glasdale had sworn an oath that when it was taken, all the inhabitants should pass under fire and sword, but meanwhile they gave him considerable embarrassment. Their artillery was better than the English, and better served. They had one great bombard on the rampart of Belle-Croix, directed against the Tournelles, which discharged stones of a hundred and twenty pounds' weight. This piece had for supporters two cannon, yclept *Montargis* and *Rifflart*. Rifflart killed its man at every shot. But the most formidable machine of any was the culverin of Master Jean, a cannonier from Lorraine. He had mounted it on a light carriage, and the English met it everywhere in *sortie* and skirmish, doing marvels of mischief. At last, they met it one day when the luck was against Master Jean, and captured it,

and carried it off to the Tournelles to serve themselves.

Christmas was hardly turned when scarcity began to make itself painfully felt in Orleans. La Hire and Poton de Saintrailles foraged the country far and wide, sweeping off everything eatable they could find. Bourges sent in succours early in January, but a relief of five hundred head of cattle coming in from Blois a week later, was intercepted and taken by the English, who took also the raft which served the citizens as a bridge to bring their supplies across the river. It was in the sally to recover this raft that Master Jean lost his culverin. The day altogether was a black day for Orleans. The citizens sent envoys to the king at Chinon, craving, entreating more aid, and the heart of every true lover of France prayed God they might have it, and have it speedily, if France was to be saved.

It was the helplessness, distress, and anarchy which reigned in the central parts of the country that had tempted the English into this general attack on the line of the Loire, and its rapid success quite disheartened Charles VII. He saw in his multiplied misfortunes an evident design of Providence to take away his kingdom, and the craven-pious idea made all his measures for its amelioration slow and indecisive. The most energetic and unselfish adviser he had near him at this juncture was Queen Yolande of Sicily, the mother

of his young wife, Marie of Anjou. He and France had no worse enemy than Georges de la Trémouille, the minister who had chiefly directed his counsels and influenced his conduct since the disastrous day of Verneuil.

Georges de la Trémouille had been introduced to Charles by the Constable de Richemont, brother of the Duke of Brittany, and had dexterously supplanted his patron, and driven him from court. Pliant to Charles's humours, greedy, intriguing, despotic, and treacherous, he had achieved a position and a fortune second to none, and had kept them by skilful tacking between all parties. He possessed kinsfolk and friends in the household of Philip of Burgundy, and so much interest in the councils of the regent Bedford, that while the English were overrunning and ravaging all the rest of the Orleanais, they spared the town of Sully—a lordship of his.

This was looked on in France with a very suspicious eye, but the minister was strong enough to defy suspicion. He had succeeded in isolating Charles from nearly every prince of the blood, and having found his profit in the miseries of his country, he desired no better than to perpetuate them. He had discouraged the employment of the Free Companies against the enemies of France, and had fought her battles with mercenaries from Scotland and Lombardy, until her own sons had

lost nerve, and the time seemed near at hand when she would have no battle to fight or men to fight it. But the sight of Orleans perishing roused the people to demand that something be dared and done; and the king and his minister, at last, called on the princes and captains, long rusting inactive, to carry succour to the beleaguered city, and to save it if they could.

The echoes of the siege of Orleans resounded throughout Europe, and very loudly on the borders of Lorraine. Every wayfarer who halted at Domremy had some bad news to tell—some disastrous possibility to predict. Jeanne d'Arc gathered up each grief, and pondered on it. Through the fading autumn and dark winter days, her *voices* urged her without ceasing: *Go into France**—*deliver Orleans—crown the Dauphin.* The angel-haunted glory brightened so often before her gaze that her awe became an inexpressible joy. But the strife in her heart between love to her own people, and duty to that high command which thrilled her conscience as the call of God, was very cruel.

Many heavy and perplexed days passed over her at this time. Words that sounded idle and visionary when she uttered them were remembered afterwards as full of meaning. *Now* she said to

* By *France* was popularly understood at this period no more than the ancient dominion of Hugh Capet.

herself that she would rather be torn by wild horses than leave peaceful Domremy; *then* the *voices* reminded her of the trouble and wretchedness that were among the people, and she felt only an urgent necessity to be gone and succour them.

At last, one dull February afternoon, an irresistible impulse of obedience took possession of her, and without farewell to father or mother, to sister or brother, she fled from her home. As she passed the house of Mangète's parents, the little girl was standing at the door, and Jeanne cried out to her, "Adieu, Mangète; God keep thee!" She was going in the direction of the chapel at Bermont, but before night she arrived at her uncle's house at Burey-le-Petit. He and her aunt received her kindly; and she told them she must go to Vaucouleurs again, to renew her petition to the governor.

Durant Laxart had more confidence in his niece than any other of her kinsfolk. She recalled to him the ancient prophecy of the deliverance of France by a maid from the marches of Lorraine, and finding her resolved to persevere, with or without his protection, he conducted her to Vaucouleurs again. This time he took her to the house of a townsman, Henri Royer, a wheelwright, and left her in the care of his wife Katherine, a quiet, good woman, who set her to spin, went with her to mass, saw that she confessed, and for three weeks watched over her with motherly tenderness.

It was soon known at home where she was, and that Robert de Baudricourt still laughed at her enthusiasm. Her parents let her remain, trusting, perhaps, that his discouragement would prove more effectual in turning her from her wild purpose than any forbidding of theirs. It was weariful waiting-work for her. To matins and to mass did not fill the tedious days; and many a long hour she spent spinning at Katherine Royer's wheel, while thoughts of what should come to pass hereafter weighed upon her heart, and grew into a burthen almost heavier than she could bear. Her hostess pitied her; she said the time lagged with her as with a pregnant woman, before they sent her to the court. Her mission was the perpetual subject of her conversation, at all seasons and in all companies.

"I must be with the Dauphin by Mid-Lent, though I should travel upon my knees. I must absolutely go—my Lord wills it. It is on the part of the King of heaven that this work is confided to me. Have you never heard how it has been prophesied that France, lost by a woman, shall be restored by a maid from the marches of Lorraine?"

Katherine Royer and others remembered the old prediction, and were much struck. They began to attach more importance to Jeanne's vagaries. It seemed that she had ascribed to herself, or had

been inspired to fulfil, a certain vocation. It grew soon into common fame about Vaucouleurs that there was a girl come from Domremy demanding of the governor a guard and guides to conduct her to the king, and that she gave herself out as commissioned by God to deliver France from the English. The popular sentiment of the hour was in Jeanne's favour: France was fallen so low, that it needed a miracle to raise it. The report of her spread. A knight of Metz, Jean de Novelonpont, went to see her at Royer's house. He was a brave, honest gentleman of some thirty years old, not unwilling for an adventure. He found Jeanne spinning at her wheel, dressed in her old red peasant's garb, a noble-looking, grandly-built peasant girl.

"What are you doing here, *ma mie?*" asked he. "Will not our king be driven from his kingdom? Shall we not all have to become English?"

Jeanne answered him with her formula so often repeated in vain. "I have come into this royal city to require of Robert de Baudricourt that he will either take or send me to the Dauphin, but he heeds neither me nor my words. Nevertheless, before Mid-Lent I must be with him, though I wear my legs to the knees in going. None other in the world—no prince, no duke, no daughter of the King of Scots*—can recover the kingdom of

* There was already a treaty on foot for contracting the infant son of Charles VII. to a Scottish princess.

France, nor succour it, unless by me. Albeit, I would choose rather to stay near my poor mother, that is not my lot. It behoves me to begone, and do what my Lord wills that I shall do."

"Who is your Lord?" asked Jean de Metz, as Robert de Baudricourt had asked her once before.

Jeanne said her Lord was God. The knight was impressed. He felt her sincerity; he discerned her heroic capabilities. "By my faith," cried he, giving her his hand, "under God's safeguard, I will conduct you to the king myself. When will you set out?"

"Better now than to-morrow—better to-morrow than later," was her prompt reply.

"And how will you go clad?" Jeanne said she would willingly put on men's clothes.

This involved some delay. Meanwhile the knight sent her a suit belonging to a page of his own to try on, and spoke to Bertrand de Poulangy, who was also prepossessed in her favour about accompanying him on this journey into the heart of France, which, from the length of the way to Chinon—a hundred and fifty leagues—the season, and the disturbed state of the country, was likely to be one of no common peril. Bertrand de Poulangy, who was about six years the elder of Jean de Metz, entered into the scheme with joyful alacrity, and some of the inhabitants of the town agreed together

to provide Jeanne with a horse, and the complete equipment of a young man-at-arms.

Robert de Baudricourt, to whom alone Jeanne had revealed the manner of her visions, influenced by the popular movement in her favour, but still treating her pretensions as mere folly and superstition, now determined to put her to a proof quite in conformity with the prejudices of his time. He went to Henri Royer's house in company with Jean Fournier, the curé of Vaucouleurs, to whom she had confessed, for the purpose of having her exorcised. They shut themselves up in the room with her, and the priest displayed before her eyes the stole, the distinctive sign of his ministry. Jeanne, much surprised, knelt reverently down, and then Fournier with solemnity adjured her, if she were an evil thing, to depart from them, and if a good thing, to approach. She moved forward on her knees, paying homage to the sacred office of the priest, not to the priest himself; for in recounting the interview to Katherine Royer afterwards, she said that it was ill-done of him to act thus, because he had received her confession.

Notwithstanding the good warranty of the ordeal he had chosen, the governor was still reluctant to assume the responsibility of starting Jeanne upon her mission; and she was almost equally reluctant to set forth without his assent, and some letter of recommendation or introduction which would preserve her from wearing the air of an adventuress on

her arrival at court. A rumour of her had flown as far as Nancy, and the Duke of Lorraine, who then lay ill there, sent a messenger with a safe-conduct to bring her to him. Jean de Metz escorted her as far as Toul, and then returned to Vaucouleurs, while her uncle Durant Laxart and the messenger went forward with her to Nancy. The duke questioned her of her wishes, but he intended rather to receive help than to give it. The wisdom of physicians had failed him in his malady, and discerning, as he thought, a strain of the *seer* in Jeanne, he inquired if she knew whether he should ever be healed of his sickness. Jeanne replied that she could not tell, but she counselled him to recall from her convent his good wife, Margaret of Bavaria, whose society he had forsaken for that of a young mistress, Alizon Dumay. He was not affronted by her courageous counsel, which he told to other persons. He gave her a small present of money, and promising to pray God for the recovery of his health, she left him to make a pilgrimage to the neighbouring shrine of St Nicholas-du-Port—a very popular shrine—before returning to Vaucouleurs.

During her absence her father and mother had been over, and had seen Jean de Metz. They had seen also how strong was the enthusiasm for her amongst the people; and feeling, perhaps, that it was useless to oppose her, they had gone home again to Domremy, without waiting for her return

from Nancy. But her father was almost crazed with grief, her mother almost heart-broken. Jeanné was sad, too—yet she *must* go. She sought Robert de Baudricourt again, and told him the Dauphin's people were suffering great ruin before Orleans, and that they would suffer yet greater if he did not make haste and send her to their aid. How he was moved to compliance at last does not appear, but he was moved. He presented her with a sword, and wrote a letter to the king explaining her condition, her persistent applications to himself, and the reasons she alleged for them, and gave it to her to be delivered on her arrival at Chinon.

There was now nothing to retard her departure, unless it were the unavailing sorrow of her parents. She sent them a letter entreating their forgiveness, and they returned her a tender answer. Her first success was not all joy. She spent much of her last days at Vaucouleurs in the church; and a little chorister belonging to it espied her once for a long hour in the crypt, kneeling before an image of the holy Virgin, her head inclined upon her breast, meditating and praying, with a countenance very sorrowful and downcast.

But one morning—the 24th of February it was—a company of townsfolk and countryfolk assembled before the governor's house, saw her come out transformed into a young soldier, looking of the

middle height of men, her luxuriant hair cut round above her ears, straight as a lance, alert, intrepid of air, of spirit, of speech. She was at this time so spare of flesh that the disguise was perfect. In the street waited, ready armed and mounted for a start, Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulangy, Colet de Vienne, a king's messenger, Richard, an expert archer, a servant of the knight's and a servant of the esquire's, one of whom held the horse Jeanne was to ride. Robert de Baudricourt, who had made them all swear an oath to conduct her safely, defending her life and honour with their own until they brought her to the king, came out with her, and set her in her saddle, rallying her, meanwhile—rallying himself, perhaps—that she had made him half believe in her, begging to know whether, martial as she looked now, she ever meant to come back in peace, and marry like other maidens.

"Yes," replied Jeanne, gaily. "When I have done and accomplished all that God, by revelation, commands me to do, then I shall have three sons, of whom the first will be pope, the second emperor, and the third king."

"I wish one of them might be mine," said the governor, with a soldier's plainness. "If they are to be personages of such high rank, it might be to my advantage in the future."

"Nay, bonny Robert—nay; it is not time. The

Holy Spirit will provide," retorted Jeanne, with subtilty.

The escort had now fallen into marching order, and looking round at the familiar faces from Domremy which she had known since she was a child, and at the newer friends of Vaucouleurs who had so generously taken up her cause, Jeanne said, "Adieu! I am going into France."

"Go," answered Robert de Baudricourt, "and let what will come of it come."

And so she rode away, the Maid from the marches of Lorraine, who was to be the saviour and deliverer of France—the knight on her one hand, the esquire on the other—her eyes resting on a golden ring, the gift of her father and mother, which was engraved with three crosses, and the words, JHESUS MARIA.

IV.

THE JOURNEY.

THE journey of Jeanne d'Arc and her escort from Vaucouleurs, to Chinon occupied eleven days. The country through which they had to pass at the beginning of it was overrun with English and Burgundian soldiers, and to the dreary desolation of winter was added the drearier desolation of pillage and rapine. They continued their march all through the first night, and on the second they rested at Saint-Urbain, where they found shelter in the Abbey. Afterwards, for greater safety, they travelled as often after dark as in the day-time, and as secretly as they could. Jeanne's hardy breeding now stood her in good stead. Whenever and wherever it was expedient to halt, she could lie down and sleep just as she was, wrapped in the warm woollen coverlet which had been furnished to her as part

of her equipment; and, to avoid any suspicion or danger on account of her sex, she slept always between the knight and the esquire, both of whom had conceived a brotherly, protective affection for her, seeing her so good, and so full of courageous simplicity and confidence. Her countenance in repose was of childlike innocence; her first thought at waking was to sign herself with the cross, to invoke God and pray.

Through all the privations and hazards of the way, Jeanne's secret *counsel* kept up her heart, and she cheered her companions if they flagged by assuring them that when they came to Chinon, the Dauphin would give them good welcome, and that for the perils of the road they need not fear.

"It is for this I was born," said she. "My Lord will make the way plain before me. It is now four or five years since my brothers in Paradise began to tell me that I must go and fight to recover the kingdom of France, and they bring me word now of all that I have to do."

The men put great faith in her words, and they had need of some good assurance. All the considerable towns for nearly eighty leagues on their journey, were subject to the English king; and besides avoiding the enemy's foraging and skirmishing parties that infested the roads, they had to risk the passage of many streams and rivers by fords, at that season of the year dangerously swollen.

They crossed the Marne above Joinville, the Aube near Bar-sur-Aube, the Seine near Bar-sur-Seine, and the Yonne at Auxerre, entering no city if they could avoid it, and travelling by roundabout and deserted tracks.

But on coming to Auxerre, Jeanne had a great desire to hear mass, not having heard it since leaving Vaucouleurs, and she prevailed on Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulangy to go with her to prayers in the cathedral. From this place, which was a great stronghold of Burgundy, they proceeded to Gien, arriving there in the early days of March. It was the first town they had come to that was obedient to Charles VII., and thence a rumour of Jeanne flew before her, and came to Orleans—now fallen into deepest dejection from a ruinous defeat which its defenders had sustained three weeks before in the Beauce.

In answer to the petition of the citizens for aid after the seizure of the succours sent from Blois about the middle of January, small bodies of soldiers kept arriving day and night until, at the end of the month, there were seven thousand fighting men within the walls, and the most famous of all the captains of France. Besides these there was a considerable body of stout Scots, faithful allies of Charles, under excellent commanders. The English

paid them no heed. They toiled doggedly on at their fortresses all through the Christmas weather, and were preparing to connect them with strong lines, so as completely to enclose the city, when a report reached the besieged that the regent Bedford was sending another reinforcement from Paris to the English camp, with three hundred waggons of military stores, and a vast supply of herrings for Lenten-fare. The famous knight, Sir John Falstaff, was said to be coming in command of this important convoy; and the Count of Clermont, eldest son of the captive Duke of Bourbon, usurping precedence over better soldiers than himself, undertook to stop it.

The scouts brought in news on the 12th of February that it was approaching through the Beauce, and Clermont marched out of Orleans at the head of a splendid army of knights and nobles, and five thousand men of the flower of Auvergne, Berry, and Bourbon. He came up with Falstaff near Rouvray-Saint-Denis. The English escort was only fifteen hundred, but the commander had drawn up his waggons in a hollow square for easier defence, and had mounted atop of them his expertest archers. The French opened fire with their artillery, and quickly broke up a host of his herring-tubs, strewing their contents about the ground. Falstaff's little force seemed menaced with total destruction; but Clermont, in pure bravado, threw

away an easy victory. He dismounted, and with a crowd of knights, some wiser than himself, but none willing to be outdone in daring, attempted to come to close quarters with the English. But he came only to ignominious defeat. The archers had their cumbrously-armed assailants at a terrible disadvantage on foot. They dropt before the cloth-yard shafts by scores, and where they dropt they lay. The brave Scots left their best leaders on the field. Of the French, none delayed to fly who could. Clermont turned his back with the first; and while Dunois, wounded, and La Hire, raging furiously, covered the retreat, he fled unpursued to Orleans, arriving there about midnight, to throw the beleaguered city into despairing confusion with the tidings of his shameful disaster.

Clermont and some other young nobles of his train consoled themselves with a jest, and called this day of their disgrace the *Battle of the Herrings*. But the citizens of Orleans saw no pleasantry in it, and as he and his followers were so cowed by their overthrow, that for a week after they would bear no part in sally or skirmish, they bade him and them begone out of the place; where there was no food for idle mouths. Clermont went, carrying with him two thousand soldiers. Soon after, Louis du Culant, admiral of France, quitted the city, which appeared doomed. Next followed the chancellor, Regnauld de Char-

tres, Archbishop of Rheims, and finally the Bishop of Orleans, departing in spite of the supplications of his flock, that he would stay by them, and comfort them in their extremity.

It was at this moment, when destruction loomed dark and near upon Orleans, that there came flying on the wings of the wind a promise and hope of miraculous deliverance to be wrought by means of a maid from the forests of Lorraine. She was coming by Gien—she was coming by Saint-Katherine-de-Fierbois—she was coming by Chinon, where the king was—"coming to ride over the backs of the archers"—the Maid the prophet Merlin prophesied of—the Maid who was to save France, which that wicked queen, wicked woman, wicked mother, Isabeau, the she-wolf of Bavaria, had robbed from her son, and delivered into the power of the English stranger!

Let her come! Their princes, their high priests had abandoned them—their mighty men-at-arms were nought! Let her come, the maid from the forests of Lorraine!—let her come, in the name of God, and deliver them if God would! The race was not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Perchance it might please Him to show forth His power over France by the hand of this lowly maid, as He showed it of old to Israel, by the hand of His servant David, the shepherd of Bethlehem, the warrior-king!

It was nearly as far from Gien to Chinon as from Vaucouleurs to Gien, but the route of Jeanne d'Arc and her little company lay now through loyal territory. They could press straight forward, and on the 6th of March they arrived at the village of Fierbois in Touraine, only a short half-day's journey from Chinon. Thence Jeanne sent on before her to the king the letter of Robert de Baudricourt, announcing that she had come a hundred and fifty leagues to his aid, and that she was bringing him good news from God.

Such a strange announcement was not likely to find a very gracious reception at the court. Surprise and derision were the first sentiments it awakened, and then followed curiosity with a mixture of doubt. Georges de la Trémouille was mercilessly jealous of whatever threatened to come between himself and the king; he set his face, and raised his voice against Jeanne d'Arc at once, and had it been in his power, he would have hindered her from reaching Chinon. Nor was his the only opposition prepared beforehand to thwart her. The temporising Archbishop of Rheims, was loud in crying her down. He believed diplomacy the only weapon for pacifying the realm; and being a clever negotiator, and very vain of his importance, he could have no sympathy with a peasant-sibyl who proclaimed herself sent to conquer peace at the point of the lance. There were others against her

besides these, the two chief ministers of the king, but they were less virulent in their resistance, and less fatally influential afterwards upon her fortunes. For the present, however, all opposition was overborne by the majority, and Jeanne was bidden to come forward to Chinon.

The voice of the people had probably made itself audible in the councils of the king. They were talking of her that day in Orleans when she heard three masses in the church of St Katherine-de-Fierbois, where there lay secret, invisible, in the earth behind the altar, an ancient sword with five crosses on the blade, which, in her hand, was to become as an avenging and devouring flame against the enemies of France. They were talking of her on the morrow, when she rode at noon safe and well into Chinon, and dismounted at the hostelry of a good woman near the castle.

"What God keeps is well kept." Jeanne's long and arduous journey was accomplished—accomplished without one accident, one delay, one serious hindrance.

They were talking of her in Orleans during those two days of disappointed waiting that ensued upon her arrival; talking of her, urging Dunois, the sad despondent people, to send messengers to inquire the truth concerning her, while the royal council were deliberating at leisure on the mystery of this seventeen-year maid who professed that she had a

message from the King of heaven to their beaten and disinherited king which she could deliver to none besides.

They were talking of her everywhere up and down the Loire, talking of her in the busy, crowded English camp, where the soldiers caught up every echo of her report, and whispered one to another, amazed, afraid.

"What! Sent of God against *them?* Nay, sent of the devil rather!" laughed Suffolk, Talbot, Glasdale.

"*Sent of the devil?*" muttered the men. "That was still worse! Had the powers of hell never prevailed? Why, their luck was beginning to change already. Had not Burgundy wished to save Orleans, and had not Bedford protested that he did not beat the bush for another to take the birds? Had not Burgundy quarrelled with Bedford for this, and carried away his army from the siege? If their commanders were divided amongst themselves, how were they to stand against France, backed by the devil and his witch-maid?"

Already those two great movers of men, exhilarating hope and paralysing fear, were preparing Joanne's way before her.

V.

THE PROBATION.

CHARLES VII. and his advisers had every reason to desire to test the sincerity of Jeanne d'Arc as far as it was capable of being tested. If her inspiration were true, or if she had perfect faith in it, it was sure to carry her far, sure also to kindle the enthusiasm of other minds. But if it were a vain pretence, it was equally sure to collapse when she came face to face with the dangers she courted, and to put a blacker shame upon the king, should he have adopted her services, than any that had befallen him yet.

Charles's position was fast growing desperate. In his treasury were not four crowns. There was such suffering and penury in the parts obedient to him, that his loyal subjects were ready to abandon themselves to despair. The meagreness of his

table and the scantiness of his wardrobe were the theme of popular satirical rhymes.

> " Un jour que la Hire et Poton
> Le vindrent veoir pour festoyement,
> N'avait qu'une queue de mouton,
> Et deux poulets tant seulement."

But his necessities were long since past a jest with Charles. Orleans lost, all was lost. Sometimes he felt tempted to throw up the game, and to retire from the bloody quarrel altogether. The legitimacy of his birth and the consequent lawfulness of his title to the crown of France, had been openly impugned by some of his enemies. When things went very ill with him, he even admitted the doubt into his own mind. One night about this time, when they were declining to their worst, he rose from his bed, and passing into his oratory, prayed secretly in his heart, without utterance of words, that if he were the true heir, descended from the noble house of France, and that the kingdom ought justly to appertain to him, it would please God to keep and defend him, or, at least, to suffer him to escape death or captivity, and to find refuge in Spain or Scotland, which were the ancient allies, and companions-in-arms of the kings of France.

His affairs were in this position when Jeanne d'Arc arrived at Chinon, proclaiming herself as sent of God to retrieve them. She had traversed un-

harmed a thousand dangers to come at him. The people believed an angel had led her by the hand. Jean De Metz and Bertrand de Poulangy related how, when she talked to them by the way of her divine mission for France, they had felt their hearts inflamed, as never before, by the love of God. Some of her ruder companions avowed that, at first setting out from Vaucouleurs, they were tempted by her recklessness of danger to abandon her as either crazy or bewitched; but soon they had no will save hers, and were as anxious as herself that she should reach the king. One even confessed that her beauty had inspired him with evil desires, but a look from her was enough to fill him with invincible shame.

These natural effects of her enthusiasm and simplicity were not sufficient to satisfy the popular appetite for marvels. A story of a band of robbers who were waiting in ambuscade to plunder the travellers, but were paralysed and struck motionless as Jeanne passed, gained ready acceptance with the multitude.

The credulous and superstitious began to cite prophecies, old and new, to prove that a deliverer, long expected, was come at last. Dunois sent two knights from Orleans to hear about Jeanne, and to advise that she should be employed; for the city had no hope left unless in God. The royal council only were divided in opinion about her. Some of

the members said, no credence ought to be attached to her pretensions; others said, since she professed to hold a commission from God, let the king, at least, hear her.

While these debates were in progress, Jeanne was removed from the hostelry where she had descended on her arrival, to the castle of Coudray, about a league from Chinon, and committed to the care of a lady of distinguished virtue, the wife of Guillaume Bellier, master of the royal household. Two or three of the councillors were deputed to visit and examine her there, and she was introduced to them by Jean de Metz. The councillors begged her, on the part of the king, to declare her special object in coming to the court, and after some hesitation, she avowed the chief points of the great ministry she believed herself appointed to perform —to raise the siege of Orleans, and to crown the king. They carried their report to Charles, and it was finally resolved that he should grant her an interview.

It was announced to Jeanne during the afternoon of her third day at Chinon that the king would receive her. She was in one of her most exalted moods at the moment, and the possession did not pass off. Jean de Metz conducted her to the castle, and near the gate they encountered a man on horseback, who asked with an oath and a rude jest if she

were the maid from Lorraine of whom all the world was prating. Jeanne looked up at him and said: "Dost thou deny God, near death as thou art?" and went forward to the castle. Before she quitted it again, the man had come by his end mysteriously in the river. The story spread. *A prophetess*, whispered the people; *but was her inspiration of heaven or of hell?*

Jeanne was led into the king's presence by Louis de Bourbon, Count of Vendôme. It was late in the day, and fifty torches illumined the hall. More than three hundred nobles, knights, and gentlemen were assembled—Jamet de Tilloy, a knight of Brittany, and the lord of Villars, seneschal of Beaucaire, the two envoys from Orleahs, being amongst them. The court had put on all its pomp for the occasion, but Jeanne's imagination dwelt too much in glorious cloudland to be dazzled by a silken show. She came straight to the king, with her natural air of brave, frank simplicity, and though Charles pointed to a much more magnificent personage than himself, and said, "Jeanne, there is the king," she knelt and replied, "*You* are the king, and none other—God give you good life, gentle lord!"

The favourable witnesses professed to see miracle in this recognition; but Jeanne had not dreamed for four years of restoring France without learning of what countenance and character was the prince

for whom she was to restore it. She knew by heart every feature of his pale face, with its expression of goodness and wisdom, which needed the sun of better fortunes to ripen them. She knew his graceful figure, his gracious air—knew, too, his indolence, his instability, his weakness of will, his dread of danger and violent death. If he had been a great ruler, a high-couraged warrior, would France have needed her?

Charles asked her what was her name.

"Jeanne the Maid," replied she. He inquired further what she wanted of him.

"The King of heaven sends me to succour you and your kingdom, and to conduct you to Rheims for your coronation."

The courtiers were inclined to laugh. To Rheims!—it was in the very centre of the power of England and Burgundy. The road to it bristled with their fortified cities, their castles, and their armies.

Charles took her speech more seriously. He led her apart from the crowd, and conversed with her for a very long time. The watchful and curious courtiers observed that a lively expression of satisfaction diffused itself over his visage as they talked. He asked her an infinite number of questions about herself, her inspiration, her intentions, and some of her replies answered peculiarly to his private scruples and private prayer.

"I tell you on the part of God that you are the

true heir of France, and son of the king," said Jeanne.

Whether she understood at the time the full significance of her words or not, they profoundly impressed Charles; and either then or later, by some admission or explanation of his, she became aware that she had spoken to him touching a matter which lay between his own conscience and God only. She also became aware what the matter was, and how fatally its publication might injure him; what a terrible weapon would be put into the hands of his enemies if they learnt that he had even for an instant entertained a doubt of the legitimacy of his birth, such as his prayer implied.

The king announced to the assembled courtiers that from certain things Jeanne had said to him, he had conceived much confidence in her; and then, for that day, she was dismissed.

It was widely whispered afterwards that there was a great *secret* between Charles and the Maid; and so many indiscreet and inquisitive persons pressed Jeanne to reveal it, that she made a vow of perpetual silence. It was not until long after both she and the king were dead, when the English had lost all in France but their old conquest of Calais, that a version of this *secret* became known through an aged knight, the Chevalier de Boissy, who, in his youth, had been the only gentleman Charles would admit into the privacy of

his bed-chamber. He professed to have had it from the king's own lips, and as he told it, Jeanne had revealed to Charles the words and manner of his unspoken prayer. Without intruding into the region of pure miracle, there was enough done to give him interest and confidence in her when he heard a direct answer to it from her mouth, whatever question or suggestion of his had drawn it forth.

At the beginning of her mission, Jeanne d'Arc, in speaking of the *voices*, which had become the literal law of her life, called them her *counsel*. In all the lulling, sweet sounds of nature she still heard them as articulate tones. In the ripple of the fountain at Domremy, in the village-bells which she had many a time bribed the careless little ringer to ring steadily, in the whispering glades of the forest, in the breathings of every wind, words of command, encouragement, direction, and comfort—the inspiration or the echo of her own vivid, out-reaching genius—had been brought to her bodily ears like real speech; and the varied intonations she still ascribed in implicit confidence to the archangel and the saints in the glory that had passed before her bodily eyes. And this confidence was never shaken. During that brief, awful trial of her faith, which intervened between the moment when death was announced to her and

her carrying forth to her martyrdom, she replied to the urgent entreaties of the priests, baiting her for some admission of imposture, that her *visions* and *voices* were, indeed, true. The monk who received her last confession, who followed her to the stake, and stood by her to the end, bore witness afterwards that to the death she believed her vocation to have been from God; that to the death she maintained she had done well in acting by the command of her *counsel;* and though obedience had brought her to that bitter pass, she did not think her *counsel* had betrayed her. Her conscience of having wrought a good work for France—her assurance that God, who fulfils Himself in many ways, had not forsaken her, carried her through, and no victory she ever won over her adversaries was more triumphant than her martyr's death.

Of Jeanne's good faith the severest criticism has ceased to raise a doubt. Her vocation was not the hollow fantastic dream of a sickly visionary, but an impulse to act—a *possession* which burthened her until she was free to act. Her frame was the very expression of youthful vigour, her spirit of robust energy. Her physical sensibilities, her moral instincts, were of the highest, finest order. Her perception of the feelings and thoughts of certain persons, her prescience of certain events concerning them and herself, reached the utmost limits of the faculty of intuition. She always denied in express

terms any foresight beyond her mission, and in everything nearly or remotely connected with that, she declared herself subject to the guidance of her divine *voices*, and avowed that she had no power, or will, or knowledge in it, apart from what they taught her.

It was a sublime task she had undertaken—nothing less than the reunion of a great nation split in two, with a vast gulf of wrongs and enmities yawning between, and a powerful foreign foe interested to keep it open. That it would be accomplished was her full assurance; her *voices* had promised it, and her *voices* were the pledge of God. In her darkest days, she saw France one again, her king restored, her people at peace, the English vanished out of the land. That it was a good work she had never a doubt, or that it was God's work—all the kingdoms of the world His, to give to whomsoever He would!

Her thoughts, her hopes stretched out sometimes to the end of it, going before her *voices*, and she dreamed there would be no ebb in the tide of success Heaven would send her. In proclaiming herself its envoy, she made an immense demand on the faith of both Charles VII. and the people, and gave her adversaries the opportunity of preparing for her a fearful fall. It is only the single-minded who can achieve high objects. Jeanne was all magnanimity, all pure, unselfish devotion to God,

to king and country, and her mind was perplexed with no fears, embarrassed with no distrusts of those she came to serve. Her philosophy did not discern with what sluggish drags, what cunning hindrances, what crafty feints, what subtle treacheries bad men might traverse her great counsels to serve their own mean purposes. She knew nothing yet of the fickle favour that shouts to-day, *Hosanna!* and to-morrow, *Crucify!* that kisses the feet of good luck, and sees the curse of hell in misfortune. She could not conceive of the base ingratitude which would abandon her; of the brutal, blind wickedness which would deny her as God-forsaken or devil-inspired when the ill-will of enemies had brought her to a check.

And it was good that she should have no revelation of such certainties beforehand. Another seer might have prophesied to her the fate she tempted, in standing forth as saviour and deliverer on the sea of troubles that roared over France. But God mercifully gave her only one vista through the storm—restoration for her country, and salvation for her own soul closing it—all the way thither full of the spray of tears, of shadows, which were to clear and drift step by step before her, until suddenly they rolled all away, and showed her the fire of martyrdom, and beyond it the blessed rest of heaven.

At the moment of Jeanne d'Arc's appearing, the Church was no less distracted and divided than the world. There were "three Popes, each holding St Peter's chair with so fast a fist that the joints thereof were forced asunder, and its crown so battered with their thunderbolts of curses, that it was flatted and made unfit for any of their heads." The Turks were gaining on the Christians in the East; the Hussite wars were rending Germany; society everywhere seemed nigh to be dissolved. Out of the confusion rose prophets and prophetesses in abundance, and nowhere rose more than in France—tormented minds longing to forestall the evil days with the hope of better. There was a mendicant friar, a famous preacher, called Brother Richard, who had been to Jerusalem, and who, by his sermons in Paris, had turned to devotion more persons than any preacher who had risen in France for a hundred years. He was now going to and fro bidding the peasants sow beans—"To sow a great harvest of beans; for one who was to come, would come soon, and would not tarry." There was a woman called Marie of Avignon, patronised by Benoit XIII., one of the contending popes, who had been terrified by a vision of arms presented to her, and comforted by a subsequent vision in which she was told that the arms were not for her, but for another maid, who was shortly to arise and liberate France.

Such warnings, prophecies, and dreams, oracularly indistinct as they were, wrought in the popular mind a favourable disposition to receive Jeanne d'Arc when she came; and her mission was accepted by the multitude long before the sceptical court would accept it so as to forward it.

There was a page of gentle birth at Coudray, belonging to the household of the governor of Chinon, Louis de Contes, an inquisitive lad of fourteen, who ate with Jeanne at table, and spied her with the curiosity of his mischievous race when she fancied herself unobserved. A small chapel was attached to the castle, where she spent many an hour, meditating and praying, and as it appeared to him, not seldom weeping. All who ever knew Jeanne—the playmates of her childhood, the companions of her glory, the witnesses of her passion—speak of her frequent tears.

And now, when the need of help was so urgent, they were so slow in setting her to work! People of rank and distinction, prelates and courtiers, went daily to Coudray, to question and re-question her of her mission. She told them it was time to act and leave talking. But still the royal council continued to hold its tedious deliberations, while the people of Orleans were looking out long and hungrily for their promised deliverer.

The lord of Villars and Jamet de Tilloy returned to the distressed city full of enthusiasm for the

Maid, and Dunois called a public assembly of the inhabitants before whom the two envoys narrated the scene of her reception by the king. They said that Charles had at first refused to receive her, but had, at length, been prevailed on to grant her an audience, at which she persevered in asserting that she was sent on the part of God to raise the siege of Orleans, and to conduct him to Rheims for his coronation. To carry out her work, she had earnestly required him to give her men, horses, and arms.

The king, however, was much too indolent, timid, cautious, or conscientious to make up his mind in haste to anything so unusual, though, having received Jeanne once, and acquired a certain large degree of faith in her pretensions himself, he was ready to receive her frequently again. She was with him when the Duke of Alençon, summoned from Saint Florent-sur-Saumur to see her, arrived; and as he approached the king, she asked Charles who he was. Charles replied that he was the Duke of Alençon, who had married the Duke of Orleans' daughter, and had lately been ransomed from the English, by whom he had been held prisoner since the battle of Verneuil.

"You are very welcome," then said Jeanne. "The more there are of the blood of the King of France together the better."

The manner of her accost prepossessed the duke in her favour, and he stood her friend from that

moment more kindly and constantly than any other prince about the court.

The following morning Jeanne went to mass in the royal chapel. The king saw her, and when the service was over, he brought her into his private room, and sending away all the courtiers but Alençon and La Trémouille, kept her there in conversation until dinner-time. Jeanne, wholly absorbed in her high vocation, had no doubts or hesitations in expressing her feelings and sentiments with regard to it. She and her divine *counsel* had already matured a simple, straightforward, practical policy for the pacification of France—its quarrelsome princes were to be reconciled, and the English were to be driven clean out of the country. These two objects were the final end and aim of her mission.

Amongst other things she said to Charles on this occasion, to facilitate the recovery of his inheritance, she made him three requests, all of which he promised to grant: first, that he would hold his kingdom as a trust from God; second, that he would forgive all those of his kindred who had ever been against him, or had done him any wrong; and third, that he would humble himself so far as to receive to his grace all who asked it, whether great or small. A very different policy this to what La Trémouille advocated, and one to make him fear a powerful rival in Jeanne.

After dinner, the king and Alençon went to walk in the fields near the castle, and Jeanne was bidden to come and exhibit her skill at arms. No doubt on her journey, and since, Jean de Metz and the esquire had given her many a lesson; and with her strength, grace, and good-will to learn, she had proved an apt scholar. She rode with the lance before the king, and rode with such address that Alençon, after watching her a long time, promised in his admiration to make her a present of a beautiful horse, more suited to such service than the sturdy, country-bred nag she had ridden from Vaucouleurs.

The popular enthusiasm for Jeanne went on increasing, but the king could not venture yet to decide on either employing her or rejecting her. The responsibility was too heavy for him to incur alone. Some Franciscan monks, whose habit was everywhere a safe conduct, were privately dispatched to Lorraine to investigate the minutest circumstances of her life from infancy, and after a few more days wasted in fruitless discussions at Chinon, Charles resolved to go to Poitiers, where the Parliament was sitting, and to carry her with him; that she might be solemnly examined by the learned men of the Church and University there, and an opinion given by them as to whether he might lawfully avail himself of her services or not.

At Poitiers, Jeanne was lodged in the house of the king's advocate in Parliament, Jean de Rabateau, and committed to the care of his wife, a lady of excellent reputation. For three weeks she was subjected to formal interrogatories by a number of theologians, regular and secular clergy, presided over by the Archbishop of Rheims. Amongst the commissioners chosen to examine her were Pierre de Turlure, Inquisitor of Toulouse, Pierre de Versailles, Abbot of Talmont, Jean Lombard, Professor of Divinity in the University of Paris, Brother Séguin, Dean of the Faculty of Theology in the University of Poitiers, and Guillaume Aymeri, a Dominican friar.

The examiners, armed with the king's authority, presented themselves each morning at Jeanne's lodgings, and stayed often two or three hours at a time, wearying her exceedingly. They began with an evident prejudice, but before they made an end, they were, if not themselves convinced of her divine mission, willing at least to allow that she was convinced of it. She answered them with much dignity and natural eloquence. She described to them her beautiful, angelic visions. She told them how her *voices* had urged her for four years to come into France, recounting to her the pity God had on its suffering people; and when a Carmelite, a very sour man, austerely replied that it was forbidden to put faith in such assertions without a *sign*, she

answered him, "I am not come to Poitiers to show *signs*. Send me to Orleans and I will show you a sign there. Let them give me soldiers, many or few, and I will raise the siege."

To this the Dominican, Guillaume Aymeri, rejoined, that if God were willing to deliver the people of France out of their calamities, He could deliver them without the help of men-at-arms.

"The men-at-arms must fight, and God will give the victory," said Jeanne. The monk who had drawn this response from her expressed himself as being well satisfied with it.

Occasionally her replies were rather mystical. One of the doctors exerted himself in citing numerous learned texts and quotations to prove that no one ought to believe in her. She let him say his say, and when he had finished, she answered, "There is more in my Lord's books than in all yours."

And some were very curt. Brother Séguin, a native of Limousin, with a marked provincial accent, was curious to know in what idiom Jeanne's *counsel* spoke. "He speaks," said she, "a better idiom than you."

To the general inquiries of the examiners respecting her mission, she answered that it was to recover the kingdom of France, and to conduct the Dauphin to be crowned and consecrated at Rheims. She said, she should begin by driving the English

away from before Orleans—first summoning them to begone. That after Charles was crowned, Paris should be reduced to his obedience, and the Duke of Orleans brought out of captivity. And that at last the king should have his whole sovereignty again, all the English being thrust out of France except those who should perish there. She did not say that it would be entirely her work, nor that she should see the end of it.

Besides interrogating Jeanne in company, the commissioners had leave to visit her in private if they judged fit; and on such occasions they were brought to Jean de Rabateau's house by a young equerry of the king's, Robert Thibault, who manifested an ardent sympathy in her longing to have done with argument, and to get to work. One day he was sent with the Abbot of Talmont, and another learned doctor, whom he introduced into her apartment as usual. Jeanne advanced to receive them, and the Abbot announced the object of his visit.

"Yes," said she, with a touch of impatient vivacity; "I see you are come to question me again. Listen! I know neither *A* nor *B*, but only that I am sent on the part of the King of heaven to raise the siege of Orleans, and crown the king!" Then turning to Robert Thibault, she clapped him on the shoulder, exclaiming, "I wish I had some men at command of as much good-will as you!"

There was very little done in the way of examination that afternoon, as might be expected. Indeed Jeanne, instead of disposing herself to answer questions, asked for pen, ink, and paper, and then set one of the amazed doctors to write from her dictation the first draft of her famous letter of summons to the English.

At all the public interrogatories, notaries were present who took down Jeanne's words, and at the close of them, the register was laid before the Parliament, the doctors giving it as their opinion that, considering all the imminent necessity and peril of Orleans, the king might lawfully avail himself of the Maid's services, since they had discovered in her nothing but what should be in a good Christian and good Catholic.

To make assurance doubly sure, Charles having obtained the suffrages of the wise men, sought those of the wise women also. Persons were placed about Jeanne in her lodgings, who reported her most trifling words and acts. The sum of their observations was that she never appeared idle; that daily, after dinner, she retired into an oratory attached to the house, for an interval of devotion; and that in the dead of the night she would often rise, prostrate herself in the darkness, and continue a long time in prayer. Matrons and maidens of all ranks and conditions were encouraged to visit her; and some of them having asked why she did not

wear her natural dress, she told them that since it was her vocation to serve the king in arms, it was necessary that she should be equipped in a fit and suitable fashion; and that as she should be constantly in the midst of soldiers, it was best that she should look as much like one as she was able.

It was the universal belief of the age that over a pure maiden the enemy could have no power; and to obtain a final, conclusive testimony as to whether Jeanne's inspiration was of God or of the devil, she was sent to Queen Yolande, who received her in the presence of two of her ladies, experienced matrons,—the wives of Raoul de Gaucourt and Robert le Maçon, — and who closely questioned her, to discover whether her past conduct had been always as virtuous as it was now. They were fully satisfied that it had; and the interview over, the queen entered the council chamber, and publicly told the king that they found no fault in her at all; that she was perfectly chaste, modest, simple-minded, and good. She was indeed made for her glorious work—gifted with every virtue of her sex, and exempt from all its weaknesses but tears.

After this assurance, hesitation about employing Jeanne was at an end. The Franciscans sent to inquire of her in Lorraine, brought back report of nothing but what was favourable to her; and a summary of the opinions of the doctors and others was drawn up, and numerous copies were put into

circulation. One found its way over the frontier into Germany; and another was read in the English camp—read, doubtless, with secret dismay and foreboding. The document ran to the following effect:—

"The king, seeing the necessity of his kingdom, and considering the prayers of his poor people, ought not to reject the Maid who says she is sent of God to succour him, even though her promises be but human works; neither ought he lightly to receive her. But following Holy Writ, he ought to prove her in two ways: by human prudence, inquiring into her life, behaviour, and intention; and by devout prayer, asking a sign whether she be come by the will of God or not:—as Hezekiah, Gideon, and others also asked.

"The king, since the coming of the Maid, has thus sought to prove her—keeping her near him for six weeks, and causing her birth, her life, her conduct, and her intentions to be inquired into by all manner of people,—scholars, churchmen, men of piety, men of war, wives, widows, and others. Publicly and privately she has conversed with them; and none find in her any evil, but only chastity, humility, devotion, simplicity, and honour; and of her birth and life many marvellous things are told for true.

"As to the second means of proving her, the king has required a sign of her; to which she replies,

that before the city of Orleans she will show him a sign, and not elsewhere, for so God has commanded her.

"Having regard to this—that no harm is found in her, that she promises a sign before Orleans; considering her constancy and perseverance in her purpose, and her urgent plea that she may go to Orleans with men-at-arms, the king ought not to hold her back, but to let her be conducted thither honourably, hoping in God. For to doubt her, and set her aside without any appearance of evil, would be to do despite to the Holy Spirit of Grace, and to render himself unworthy of the succour of God."

VI.

THE MARCH TO ORLEANS.

THE examinations at Poitiers concluded, Jeanne d'Arc returned to Chinon with the court, and it was decided that she should make her first essay in arms by throwing relief into Orleans, now in most dire and grievous need of it. That energetic woman, Queen Yolande, journeyed to Blois, to hurry the collecting of supplies, and soldiers were summoned to assemble there to escort the convoy.

Jeanne was now furnished, by the king's orders, with the state and attendance of a military commander. Jean de Metz was repaid the expenses of the journey from Vaucouleurs, and both he and Bertrand de Poulangy were attached to her service. Jean d'Aulon, a knight conspicuously distinguished in the court for probity and discretion, as well as

valour, was appointed by Charles himself to be her constant attendant, steward, and guardian in camp. Louis de Contes, and another youth named Raymond, were given to her as pages; and the king assigned her two heralds-at-arms, *Guyenne* and *Amblevile*. Besides these, she had also her secretary and chaplain—the latter being an Augustine monk, Jean Pasquerel, divinity-reader in a convent at Tours. He was introduced to Jeanne by her favourite brother Pierre, who had followed her into France, and whom she found at Chinon on her return to Poitiers. The lad joined himself to her train, and followed her faithfully, her companion-in-arms, until they were both taken prisoners together in the disastrous sally from Compiègne, which ended Jeanne's brief and splendid career.

An armourer at Tours was set to work to fit the Maid with beautiful armour, and thither she went, attended by Jean d'Aulon and Jean de Metz, and was lodged in the house of a wealthy citizen, named Dupuy, while it was being made. Here was painted her famous Standard—a field of white silk, powdered with lilies of France, bearing on the one side a representation of the Saviour in the clouds of heaven, the world under His feet, supported by two praying angels; and on the reverse, a figure of the blessed Virgin, and the words, "JHESUS MARIA," the inscription on her ring. All this was done by her orders, following the revela-

tions of her *voices*, which charged her, in taking the Standard, to carry it boldly.

By her *voices* also she was told that she must bear in the war a certain ancient sword, with five crosses on the blade, which lay buried behind the altar in the church of St Katherine de Fierbois. She requested that it might be sent for, and an armourer was despatched with a description of it to the ecclesiastics at Fierbois. They knew nothing of any such weapon, but they caused search to be made in the place she indicated, and at no great depth below a sword, marked as she had said, was found, very rusty with long lying in the damp earth.

The mysterious revelation of this sword to the Maid was regarded by the people as a sure sign of her heavenly mission, and they grew, by and by, to believe that her good fortune in the war depended on it. Before sending it to her, the priests of Fierbois had it brightly burnished, and put into a scabbard of crimson velvet. The citizens of Tours presented her with a second scabbard for the sacred weapon, made of cloth of gold. Finally, Jeanne herself, who reverenced it exceedingly, but who knew that it would have to serve for something more than show, ordered a third of stout leather.

Every little story that flew abroad concerning her was now seized upon more eagerly than ever, and perhaps involuntarily exaggerated. The Fran-

ciscans had brought their contribution of gossip from Domremy, which grew fast into legend. Not only were the wild birds of heaven said to have been obedient to Jeanne's call, but the wolves of the forest were declared to have respected her flock. Some enthusiasts, resolved to establish her advent as a miracle, protested that she had never mounted a horse until she set out to come into France; others, content that she should be only a marvel, asserted that she had been in the habit of riding the most truculent animals barebacked, with nothing but a halter. One faction believed that from her infancy she had been a timid, gentle devotee; the other vowed that her favourite game was to play at fighting, and that she had acquired her skill at arms by tilting at the trees with a rush or a stick for a lance. The truth lay, as it generally does, between the two extremes.

Jeanne had come from Vaucouleurs in the simple, serviceable costume of a man-at-arms, wearing a cuirass of thongs, and jacket and tunic of gray cloth; but in pursuance of the determination to send her to Orleans honourably, she was provided with rich habits, white and scarlet; and the splendid figure she made in her bravery dazzled the eyes and delighted the hearts of the populace, whose faith in her divine vocation was now strong as her own. The king's confessor had openly said, *he*

believed her an envoy from God, and after that who need doubt or distrust her?

While Jeanne d'Arc was at Tours, the Duke of Alençon sent her his promised gift—a beautiful horse—and he went over from the Abbey of Saint-Florent-sur-Saumur, where he was then residing with his wife and mother, to take her there to visit them. "And God knows," writes Perceval de Cagny, the duke's steward, "what joy Alençon's mother and his wife, the daughter of Orleans, made her for the three or four days she was in that place. And ever after she held herself nearer to the Duke of Alençon, and was more intimate with him than with any other, and always in speaking of him she called him, *My beautiful duke.*"

Alençon's wife, who fondly loved her lord, talked much to Jeanne about him, telling her how long he had been prisoner in the hands of the English, and what large sums of money had been expended to ransom him. Nor were all his hostages even yet redeemed. His refusal to adhere to the treaty of Troyes had made his detention tedious, and his price heavy; and until he should have fully acquitted his debt to his captors, he could not again take up arms for the king. He was thus debarred from going to Orleans; but he was doing his best to raise the means of buying back his hostages, that he might be free to join in any expedition afterwards planned. His wife expressed much

reluctance to let him leave her. Her father had been now for nearly fifteen years an exile in England, and it would break her heart to lose her dear lord so. Jeanne, tenderly assuming that it would be in her power, promised to have a good care of him, and cheered the young duchess by saying she would try always to send him home in better case than he left her. Such a pledge from Jeanne was worth more than gold. All good women, high and low, rich and poor, no sooner saw than they loved, honoured, and trusted her; and not a soul of them but believed that God had sent her, and had given His angels a special charge concerning her.

Jeanne's courageous simplicity of virtue was her best strength and safeguard. Her manners were as circumspect as if she had been bred in a strict well-regulated court. The rudest men of her party —and nowhere did there exist men more ferocious than the old Armagnac soldiers—respected her not only in their outward behaviour, but even in their secret thoughts. She inspired them, by and by, with a little fear, but most of them admired and honoured her. The names of Alençon, La Hire, Poton de Saintrailles, and Dunois, are inseparable from hers, as those of her companions-in-arms who aided her successes, and who never envied her them. A few mean spirits there certainly were, captains forebodingly jealous, who murmured at the king and his council for putting their confidence in her,

and who said, when she rode by, gay, gracious, and happy—for Jeanne was happy and joyous now her work was getting ready—"There goes a pretty chevalier and champion to recover the kingdom of France!" But they were obliged to speak low who spoke so; for the soldiers, the men of the people, were all for her; and the king had commanded that no man should dare to do her any displeasure, and that her will should be law in the camp.

Jeanne assumed her position as a chief of the war with the same ease as she had assumed her martial equipments. Holding her commission from God, who greater, higher, stronger than she? With His *counsel* to guide her, what fear of stumbling or straying in her steps? Without one doubt of Him as her inspirer, without one doubt of herself as His minister, full of vivid confidence, hardy resolution, unselfish singleness of purpose, she took up her commanding tone, and perilous post of leader; and by the pure lightning of her enthusiasm, kindled a flame in France which flashed and rose victoriously, and fell and destroyed herself; then smouldered on for a score of years, a slow, dead fire, but never died out until the work she began was done; until the withes of foreign tyranny were burnt and broken asunder, and the deliverance she prophesied to the king and the people was fully accomplished.

From Saint-Florent-sur-Saumur, Jeanne d'Arc, about the 24th of April, rode to Blois, to join the convoy preparing to go to Orleans. She arrived there attended by Jean d'Aulon, Jean de Metz, and a body of picked men, who had been assigned to her for a guard. Here the grooms and valets chosen for her personal service met her, bringing horses and other things necessary for her use from the king, and her household was then complete.

During the three or four days that were yet necessary to finish getting in supplies for the relief of Orleans, men-at-arms kept pouring into Blois; and Queen Yolande and the Archbishop of Rheims, aided by the Duke of Alençon, whom the king had commissioned to pay those who brought in commodities, busied themselves energetically in putting everything in forwardness for the critical expedition.

Jeanne in her way was very active too. It seemed that she wished to impress upon her work the character of a holy war. She caused a banner to be made, painted with a figure of Christ crucified; and twice daily, morning and evening, she had religious services performed for the soldiers, by her chaplain and a company of priests who were to march with the convoy. None of the men were, however, permitted to attend unless they confessed themselves; and Jeanne issued an order

that none should presume to follow her to Orleans unannealed. Like all God-fearing commanders, she esteemed it a soldier's first duty to go on service with a clean conscience, that the dread of death and judgment might not unnerve his arm in the shock of battle. The men had conceived great confidence in her, and paid her ready obedience.

From Blois Jeanne despatched her letter of summons to the English before Orleans, using as her superscription the words engraved on her ring, and inscribed on her Standard.

"✠ JHESUS MARIA. ✠

"King of England, and you, Duke of Bedford, who call yourself regent of the kingdom of France; William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk; Sir John Talbot, and you, Thomas Lord Scales, who call yourself the lieutenant of Bedford, do right to the King of heaven. Surrender to the Maid, sent hither by God, the keys of all the good cities that you have taken and violated in France. She is come to restore the blood-royal. She is ready to make peace if you will do right, and lay down the kingdom of France.

"To you, archers, companions of war, gentle and valiant, and to all others who are before the city of Orleans, in the name of God, begone into your land; or else expect news from the Maid, who will see you presently, to your very great dismay.

"King of England, I am chief of war, and in whatever place in France I meet your people, I will drive them out. If they refuse to go, I am come to slay them; if they obey, I will receive them to mercy. I am sent by God, hand to hand, to thrust you out of France. And do not think that you shall ever hold the kingdom of France from the King of heaven, the Son of the blessed Mary. King Charles shall hold it, the true heir, for God will have it so. He has revealed it to the Maid that Charles shall enter Paris with a power. If you will not believe this news from God by the Maid, when we meet you we will fall on you with such a hunting-cry as has not been heard in France for a thousand years. The King of heaven will send more strength to the Maid than you can bring against her and her men-at-arms with all your assaults; and if we come to blows then it shall be seen who has the better right—the King of heaven or you.

"Duke of Bedford, the Maid prays that you will not brave your destruction. If you do her right, you may yet come into her company, when the French shall perform the grandest deed that ever was done for Christianity. Answer whether you will make peace in the city of Orleans; and if you will not, she will remind you shortly of your very great wrongs." ["*Written the Tuesday in Holy Week. On the part of the Maid.*"]

This letter was addressed, "To the Duke of Bedford, calling himself regent of the kingdom of France, or to his lieutenants, being before the city of Orleans." Jeanne's heralds, *Guyenne* and *Ambleville*, were sent from Blois to deliver it in the English camp. It excited in the famous commanders there mingled feelings of rage and derision. No answer was returned to it, and in violation of the most ancient and sacred rights of war, the heralds were detained and menaced with death. Jeanne did not, however, hear of the contemptuous usage of her envoys until she was in a position to make her bold words good.

The beleaguered people of Orleans had by this time received assurance that the heaven-sent Maid from the forests of Lorraine was on her way to succour them. Famine, cruel famine, was in the city. Since the shameful defeat at Rouvray-Saint-Dénis, now ten weeks past, no large relief had been got into the place, and they prayed God day and night that their deliverer might not tarry. The English, elated by Sir John Falstaff's victory, had made quite sure that, with defenders like those he had beaten, Orleans must soon be theirs; and had kept such alert watch that none of Charles's dispirited soldiers would volunteer to convoy supplies until the arrival and confident promises of

Jeanne d'Arc put new heart and hope into the most cowed and hopeless amongst them.

During the interval the besiegers had continued to multiply and strengthen their fortresses, of which they had eight encompassing the city, with smaller redoubts between. In the Beauce, westward, was the bastile of Saint-Laurent on the river bank, and the bastile of London; on the north was the bastile of Rouen, opposite the gate Bannier, and the bastile of Paris, opposite the gate Parisis, on the old road to the capital; and on the north-east was the bastile of Saint-Loup, constructed upon the ruins of a church near the gate of Burgundy. In the Solonge was the bastile of Saint-Jean-le-Blanc: the Tournelles on the bridge, which had been refortified with two new ramparts, one towards the city and one towards the fields: and the bastile of the Augustines, about half a cannon-shot from the Tournelles.

Between their redoubts the besiegers had dug deep trenches by which they could pass under cover from one fortress to another. The army had been divided into two bodies, to act on each side of the Loire, and the soldiers who were not lodged in the bastiles were bivouacked in huts, formed of the trunks of trees, and roofed with thatch. There were three of these field-camps; one in the Solonge near the Augustines, and two across the Loire in the Beauce, between the bastiles of Saint-Laurent and Paris. In the Tournelles and on the south of the

river Sir William Glasdale had the chief command. In the Beauce were Suffolk, Talbot, and Scales, who possessed easy communication with the other side of the Loire by means of the redoubt of Saint-Privé, nearly opposite Saint-Laurent, and of another redoubt constructed in a little island in the middle of the stream.

There did not remain one open avenue of approach to the city, and there were not wanting anxious minds amongst Charles's party who feared that the enterprise the Maid was to lead might come to nothing. One of these, a gentleman at Poitiers, said to her that it would be an exploit very hard of accomplishment to pass the vast convoy of food and stores that was preparing safely through the English, in such force as they were both above and below the city. But Jeanne had her secret *counsel*, which bade her fear nothing, and she replied with a gay, brave air of man-at-arms, which she put on and off with her harness, "By my Martin,* we shall do it at our ease! Not an Englishman will stir, or make any show of hindering us."

The captains appointed to the command of the expedition were the marshal de Boussac, the marshal de Retz, and Louis du Culant, admiral of France. La Hire, Florent d'Illiers, and Ambrose de Loré, leaders of Free Lances, who knew Orleans

* *Martin-bâton*, a short staff carried by military commanders.

and all the neighbouring country well, came in at the first call, to join the convoy with their bands. The relief, when it was all collected, amounted to four hundred head of oxen, with multitudes of cows, sheep, and swine; there were besides sixty waggons loaded with military stores and bread, and long trains of horses loaded with sacks of flour and grain.

Jeanne d'Arc, strong in her divine commission, had announced her intention of conducting the succours to Orleans through the midst of the camp in the Beauce, to show the English, at the outset of her career, the dauntless countenance of the avenger God was sending against them. But her courageous audacity met with no response amongst the military commanders. They had witnessed yet none but moral proofs of her power, to which such men are always half-blind, and they could not condescend to submit their experience to her inspiration. Word of her plans was sent to Dunois in Orleans, and he wrote back declaring them too rash and dangerous to be attempted. She was, however, obstinate in her own views. She refused to change them, or to listen to any stale arguments of prudence or precaution; and as the king had given distinct orders that she should be obeyed as commander-in-chief of the expedition, which depended on her for its success, the captains felt themselves reduced to a great difficulty. At last,

as they could not overcome her will, they determined on circumventing it. Jeanne did not know the way to Orleans. They would set off by the side of the Solonge, as they judged most safe themselves, and leave her to discover the deception they had practised upon her when they approached the city.

It was betimes in the morning of the 28th of April, when the convoy at last set forth. The escort was an army of seven thousand, all confessed; and, by command of the Maid, no baggage and no loose women followed the camp. In the van went a company of priests, bearing their banner of Christ crucified, and singing the glorious hymn of praise and supplication, "*Veni Creator Spiritus.*"

Jeanne d'Arc rode with her knights and the captains, fully armed and clothed in white, a fine, symmetrical figure, admirable in the eyes of the soldiers. She carried her lance, and was girt with the sword of St Katherine de Fierbois. She bore her armour as lightly, and her beautiful white horse, such as only kings and heralds were wont to ride, was as obedient to her hand as if she had followed war for twenty years. The men thought wonder of it all, though it was, in fact, far more nature and use than marvel. From her infancy, Jeanne had led a free, open-air, active life; had been familiar with the ways and management of animals on a

peasant farm-stead; was ardent, intrepid, and fearless; was endowed with extraordinary power of body, and strength and grace of limb. And she had a yet greater gift than these, and one even more necessary to fit her for her mission as a leader of men—she had the swift-eye glance of military genius, which sees in an instant the thing to be done, and the swift decision of will that does it. In camp, Jeanne was no meek maiden spinning at the wheel. When she laid down the distaff and took up the sword, it was with such stern good heart, as makes men, fighting for their country, strike hard and strike home.

Before Jeanne was carried her Standard, floating resplendent on the fresh April morning. She rode in silence, her eyes resting meditatively upon her *Jhesus Maria* ring. Her companions-in-arms afterwards observed that it was her custom thus to regard it, when setting forth on any enterprise. The way must have been all uproarious with the lowing of the oxen, the bleating of the sheep, and the shouts of the drivers; with the tramp of the men-at-arms, and the roll of the heavy wains. There were echoes of the pleasant hills and fields of Domremy in the noisy chorus. Jeanne heard them, and thought of home, of father and mother; of the Beautiful May in its glory, of the fountain, and the broad glades of the oak wood. Then rose above the tumult the voices of the priests, chanting

their sacred antiphonies; and higher still one *voice*, audible only to one ear, saying: *Go on, go on, Jeanne the Maid, daughter of God; I will be with thee, to help thee.*

The march lay through the lovely valley of the Loiret, where the spring was bursting forth with gay luxuriance, and clothing the fields like a garden. The hawthorn was white with fragrance; blossoming bushes of lilac and wild-rose garlanded the sunny morning; violets, daisies, and lilies sprinkled the grass with the flower-dew of fresh youth and life. Little streams ran babbling to the great river; solemn woods stretched out like temples of verdure, pillared, high-vaulted, where myriads of birds sang their new song of rejoicing to the benign Creator.

Jeanne d'Arc had a subtle, penetrative imagination. She felt that in the most careless, as in the sternest hearts of men, there lives, however secretly, some little spark of the immortal, that may be roused to fervent fire, by the breath of piety, when danger and death are at hand. To this indestructible principle of humanity she appealed by the lips of the singing priests, and it answered her. In the sublime prayers they chanted were verses that echoed the long cry of France for pardon and pity, for rest and peace; and verses that thrilled with the spirit of hope which was faintly reviving amongst her wasted people. That ancient hymn

to the Holy Ghost which resounded in chorus again and again on the march, must have swept many a sensitive chord in the hearts of those wild, often-beaten soldiers, going out to battle under a peasant-maid, who bade them fight, trusting in God who had sent her to lead them, and they should be beaten no more.

"Come, Holy Ghost, Creator, Lord; we glory to be Thine.
Fill with Thy grace, each heart that Thou hast formed.
O Comforter! ever present with God most high: plead for us at the throne of eternal justice.
Thou art the source of life: the sacred fire of charity.
Thou art the holy unction which sanctifieth us to God.
Thou art the mysterious sevenfold gift, the recompense of the just.
Thou art the powerful finger, of the right hand of the law of God.
Thou art the first promise of the Father: worthily telling forth His wonders and His praises.
Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord.
Clothe us with love divine: hold up our wasted strength with living might.
Be Thou our guide: our helper in perplexity.
Drive far the enemy, and give us peace.
Glory to the Father, glory to the Son, glory to Thee, O Holy Ghost.
Show forth to-day Thy power upon us: that we may praise Thee from everlasting to everlasting.
Inflame our souls with love: be merciful unto us, and save us.
Send forth again Thy creating Spirit, O God, and renew the face of the earth."

To this grand petition the dawning enthusiasm of hundreds responded. Jeanne added her example and exhortations. She urged her warriors to confess their sins, and to have confidence in God, and

by God's help they should surely win the victory. In the midst of them, under the blue heavens, she knelt and confessed herself, and pure as devout contrition and priestly absolution could make her, received with tears the holy sacrament of the redemption. And after her many a rude soldier bent his head, whispering at the ear of the priest, and made himself ready to meet whatever luck or vital change the Lord God might be pleased to send him.

On the first night of the march the army rested in the fields, and Jeanne d'Arc, over-confident in her unproved strength, would lie down to sleep in her armour. She suffered for it the next day in needless fatigue and lassitude. The second night also she was lodged under no better shelter than a green woodside; and on the third morning, from a hill overlooking the wide sweep of the valley of the Loire towards Orleans, she beheld, for the first time, the faithful city which had defended itself so long as the last bulwark of the fortunes of France.

The weather was blowing up wild and stormy when the scouts brought word into Orleans at daybreak that the Maid was approaching through the Solonge with an army, a cloud of cattle, and waggons of bread and grain. All hands went immediately to work to equip sailing barges to go

down the river to meet her and bring in the supplies. The convoy was halted at the river-side a little above the bastile which the English had constructed on the church of Saint-Jean-le-Blanc—the only place near the city where the cattle and stores could possibly be embarked to cross the river. Jeanne now discovered the fraud which had been practised on her, and the captains of the convoy had abundant reason to regret it. The stream was very low, and the wind which had brought the empty barges lightly and swiftly down it, was dead against their return. To discharge the stores on the other side, the men would also have to wade breast-deep in the water—an operation very slow and perilous within view of a garrison, probably on the alert to take advantage of the least confusion amongst their enemies.

It appeared to Jeanne that her plan of marching through the midst of the English camp in the Beauce would have been much less hazardous for her army, and much more convenient for the cattle than this route by the Solonge, necessitating their disembarkation under the bastile of Saint-Loup, which rose nearly opposite the spot where it would have to be effected. But though grieved and indignant at the cautious and deceptive tactics which were endangering the success of her expedition, she encouraged the men to work and wait a while for a change of wind, bidding them be of

good heart, for by God's aid all was sure to come to a good end.

Several of the chief citizens of Orleans, eager to see the Maid, came down the river in a boat with Dunois, Nicole de Girème, Theobald d'Armagnac, and some other knights, to receive her. When they arrived in sight of the landing where the barges were loading the supplies, there was she in the midst of the throng, bearing her Standard herself, and showing by her countenance how ill-pleased she was to find the river between the city and the flocks and herds.

The brave and handsome young Dunois had arrayed himself sumptuously, and singling him out as the commander, Jeanne cried in a clear, ringing voice as soon as he came within earshot, "Are you the Bastard of Orleans?"

"I am, Jeanne, and very glad of your coming," replied he, gallantly.

"Are you he who advised that we should come by this side of the river, instead of straight through where Talbot and the English are? If we had come by the Beauce, we could have got in the relief with much less difficulty."

Dunois excused himself, saying, that considering the great power of the English in the Beauce, he and all the other captains were of opinion that it was best and safest to come by the Solonge.

"By my Martin, the counsel of God is wiser and

safer than yours," answered Jeanne. "You thought to deceive me, but you are yourself deceived. I have brought you the best succour that ever knight or city had, for it is the succour of the King of heaven, not given for love of me, but of God's own good will, who, at the prayers of St Louis and Charles the Great, has had pity on Orleans, and will not suffer that the enemy should have the lord of the city and the city too."

Dunois acknowledged that now he saw her arrived safely where she was, and the victual waiting only for a fair wind to blow it into the hungry town, he had a better confidence in her promises than before. A hasty council was held, which agreed that the convoy must march six miles higher up the river, where the little port of Checy, on the opposite bank, would afford convenient debarkation for the cattle. The army and the footsore flocks and herds set forward once more; and with what seemed to the people a beginning of miracles in their favour already, the wind suddenly changed, the stream appeared to swell with it, and the barges reached the appointed place as soon as the convoy. All the relief, live-stock and stores, was carried across the river in safety; and making a wide circuit beyond the bastile of Saint Loup, the cattle were driven into the city by the gate of Burgundy, without accident, and without any attempt at hindrance from the English.

The citizens who had come out with Dunois to welcome Jeanne, were very desirous that she should return with them, and stay in Orleans. They said her presence would be a comfort and encouragement to the dejected people. But Jeanne was reluctant to leave the army, or to let it leave her. To carry it into the city at once was impossible, from lack of food enough to fill so many additional mouths; and she had misgivings that if it returned to Blois without her, she might not be able to command it back to complete her work.

"I ought not to quit my men-at-arms," said she. "They are all confessed, and with them I have no fear of the English power."

Dunois then consulted with De Boussac, La Hire, and the other captains of the army, who urged Jeanne to comply with the prayer of the citizens, pledging themselves to rejoin her with their troops whenever they were summoned. On this she consented to remain, and, dismounting, entered Dunois' boat with her knights. Her guard of two hundred lances, her brother, her pages, and personal attendants stayed all with her, going up the river in her wake, and challenging the English as they passed in front of the bastile of Saint-Loup. The marshal De Boussac and La Hire also stopped behind. The brave rough-tongued Gascon gentleman, who never opened his mouth but out flew an oath, had adopted Jeanne into his liking, and she had also taken

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kindly to him, and had admonished him not to swear so often and so profanely by his Creator, but to swear by his Martin-bâton—as she did.

Gui de Cailly, a gentleman of Rully, near Checy, gave Jeanne some hours' rest in his house; and to avoid for her, after her three days of travel and fatigue, the tumult and excitement of the people at her entrance into Orleans, it was deferred until dusk. But the inhabitants heard that she was coming, and when she rode in about eight o'clock by the gate of Burgundy, with the magnificent Dunois on her left hand, and a splendid cavalcade of knights and guards following, the soldiers of the garrison received her with a blaze of torches, and the people, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, men, women, and children, welcomed her with such loud jubilations and such grateful tears as they might have shed had an angel descended from heaven to their deliverance. In the weird glare of the torches, the Maid saw the white and wasted faces of the long-belcaguered people pressing close upon her; saw trembling hands outstretched to touch her, to touch her horse; saw little children lifted in their mother's arms above the heads of the exultant crowd to behold her.

"Have all a good hope in God!" said she again and again, as, with her Standard cleaving a way through the crowds, she traversed the length of the city. "Have a good hope and confidence in God,

and you shall be freed from your adversaries. He has sent me to deliver Orleans."

They believed her, the beautiful white vision, looking so tender and strong, so compassionate and valiant, and wept and shouted for joy as if they were delivered already. At a certain point on her passage, the multitudes were so dense and excited, that one of the torch-bearers was driven against the Standard, and the fringe of it caught fire. Jeanne touched her horse with the spur, and in an instant had seized it, and crushed out the flame. Louder, wilder than ever rose the chorus of the people; it was marvel, all marvel that she did! In riding by the cathedral, she rested a few minutes to give thanks to God, and then was brought on her way with all honour and delight, until she came to the mansion of Jacques Boucher, chancellor and treasurer of the city, where Dunois had arranged that she should be lodged, with her attendants and her brother Pierre.

The treasurer's wife was one of the most notable dames of Orleans. She took loving charge of her guest, helped her to disarm, and then led her into a stately room, where a handsome supper had been prepared for her and the captains against their arrival. But Jeanne, who was always very abstemious at table, would take only a silver cup of wine, which she mingled with water, and five or six pieces of toasted bread, such as were used with

soup; and as soon as she had eaten them, she retired from the company with her hostess to the chamber that had been made ready for her. The treasurer's little daughter, Karlotte—a wistful, wondering, admiring child of eight or nine years old—followed them, and Jeanne, who loved all things young and innocent, took her for her bedfellow that night, and every night after that she slept in Orleans.

Marshal de Boussac, who had refused to quit the Maid until he had seen her safely lodged in Orleans, mounted his horse after supper, and rode away under the stars to overtake the army marching back to Blois.

VII.

THE RAISING OF THE SIEGE.

THE renown of the English soldiers at the advent of the Maid stood higher than that of any other race in Christendom. The glorious memory of Crecy and Poitiers, perpetuated at Agincourt, Verneuil, Rouvray, had proved them invincible in the open field. Their valour and self-confidence had no match. Their tenacity had prevailed over obstacles before which any other people would long since have given way. They were a victorious nation, proud, inured to conquest. In the camp before Orleans was the flower of their armies; heroes who had fought with Henry V.; men whose backs no enemy had ever seen; graybeard warriors, and sons of such graybeards, who did not know what fear was; the best bone and muscle that England bred, the stoutest hearts that beat under mail.

And now all this glory, honour, might, was to vanish. A reverse was to come upon them: a reverse sudden, swift, to themselves utterly inexplicable, save on the theory that God or the devil fought with their adversaries. They were a superstitious-pious soldiery; they were assured that they did well in taking away the dominion of France from her false and cruel princes; they had been so long prosperous, that it was impossible for them to conceive of God going over to the other side. When, therefore, terror fell upon them, with defeat, humiliation, grievous destruction, they referred all their calamities to satanic agency; and as the mediæval Satan was a very real and practical power amongst men, they gave way before him, supposing that he was to reign for a season, and that their turn and God's would come again by and by.

As confidence forsook the English, it entered into the French, who repeatedly betrayed what a novel sensation it was to them. They were so used to being beaten, that they hardly felt it as shame—they were surprised when any other fortune befel them. Their caution had come to be cowardice; and their military policy showed that they held discretion for the better part of valour. They could not unlearn these tactics all at once; and Jeanne d'Arc found far more vexatious hindrances throughout her career, in the royal council and the timid

routine of the elder French commanders, than in the ranks of the English and Burgundians.

On the morrow of her arrival in Orleans she rose betimes, heard mass, breakfasted, and then set off with Jean d'Aulon and her page, Louis de Contes, to the lodgings of Dunois, to confer with him on what was to be done that day. She wished to take immediate advantage of the enthusiasm her coming had excited, and to give an assault on the English bastiles forthwith. But in the council of war which the young commander summoned to meet her, the same cold, distrustful spirit prevailed as had defeated her audacious design of conducting the convoy for the relief of Orleans through the Beauce.

La Hire, Florent d'Illiers, and Poton de Saintrailles were quite of the Maid's advice; but Raoul de Gaucourt and the majority of the captains declared against any attack until the army could be recalled from Blois. In Raoul de Gaucourt, Jeanne was destined to find one of her most persistent opponents. He was an old soldier who had seen a world of service; at home and abroad, against Turks and against Christians; a restless man, who loved fighting for fighting's sake, but who could subdue himself to preach peace when war was not made according to ancient art and rule. He was, moreover, great in the councils of the king; but Jeanne, bold in her divine commission, and armed with supreme authority by Charles, was not inclined

to waive her rights, or to yield anything to the man whose slow prudence had nearly lost the city. The discussion grew warm, and her resolution and spirit were beginning to conquer, when Dunois, to avoid the dangers of division, proposed to put the question under debate to the vote. It was decided against Jeanne; and agreed that some of the commanders should proceed to Blois the next day, to bring in further supplies and reinforcements of men-at-arms; and that any assault on the great bastiles should be deferred until after their return.

Jeanne was discontented enough with this resolution, and returned with Louis de Contes to the treasurer's house, feeling much aggrieved. In the afternoon, however, La Hire, Florent d'Illiers, and one or two more enterprising knights, in defiance of orders, gratified her and themselves by making a sally against the English host out of the gate Parisis. They rode forth with banners flying, and attacked the besiegers in an entrenchment they had formed at Saint-Privé, two bow-shots from the city, and drove them temporarily out of it. A furious skirmish then ensued, in which, on both sides, were many killed, wounded, and taken prisoners. While this was going on, the artillery in the forts and on the walls kept up a continuous fire, and Jeanne, from the roof of the treasurer's house, which was near the gate Regnier, could witness all the operations of the siege.

Dunois had heard previously of the detention of the heralds who had carried the Maid's letter of summons from Blois to the regent Bedford's lieutenants before Orleans; and a report had reached the city that day of how the English had threatened to treat as heretics all they could lay hands on who put any faith in her. They had kept her heralds to burn them, she was told, and they would burn her too if ever they caught her. Jeanne made light of these menaces, neither fearing nor believing them; but Dunois despatched a herald of his own to Saint-Laurent, where Suffolk and Talbot were, demanding that her men should be surrendered, safe of life and limb, or he would put to a hard death their heralds who had come into the city to treat for the ransom of prisoners—and not the heralds only, but the prisoners also. One of the two, *Ambleville*, shortly after made his appearance in Orleans, charged with insulting messages to the Maid—the only reply the English lords vouchsafed to her letter. His companion, *Guyenne*, was still detained, and it was intimated that an appeal would be made to the University of Paris as to whether the herald of a witch might not lawfully be sent to the stake.

Jeanne was now excessively indignant, and towards evening she despatched the unwilling *Ambleville* out again to Sir William Glasdale at the Tournelles, with another brief summons of her own dic-

tating. She then went up to the rampart of Belle-Croix, facing the bastile of the bridge, and by word of mouth she charged the English, in the name of God, to begone or she would make them. Glasdale, Granville, and several others of his company, came out on the boulevard of the Tournelles, and defied her to her face; bidding her go home for a herdswoman, and keep her cows, calling her ribald names, and adding other gross insults appropriate to the ill-fame of a witch, such as the English soldiers, and some of the English commanders too, unhesitatingly believed her to be.

Nothing more shamed or enraged Jeanne than any imputation on her purity. Her face flamed, tears flashed into her eyes: "You lie, Glasdale!" cried she, and then marched away out of hearing into the church of Belle-Croix to calm and comfort herself.

In the church she encountered a very learned doctor, one Jean de Mascon, who addressed himself to her, saying, "My daughter, is it you who are come to raise the siege?"

"By my Martin, yes," replied she.

"The English are very strong and well fortified; it will be a hard thing to drive them out."

"Nothing is impossible to the power of God," said Jeanne, and the wise scholar was answered.

Early on the following morning, Sunday, the

1st of May, Dunois, D'Aulon, and the small force that was to accompany them to Blois, were ready for a start. The Maid armed and mounted her horse, and attended by La Hire and her guard, rode with them a league on their way. They ventured now to take the route through the Beauce, and she saw them safely past the English lines and their great bastile *London* before she returned to the city. The besiegers were in strong force in that entrenchment, but they lay quiet as if they were paralysed, and let her come and go without stirring hand or foot to hinder her.

When Jeanne re-entered the city, she went to mass in the cathedral; and after dinner, to gratify the inhabitants, she rode, with a gay cavalcade of knights and gentlemen, about the streets, that all might see her. Her passage was thronged as on the night of her arrival; for the people could not satisfy their eyes with admiring her, or their hearts with expressing their love and fervent devotion of gratitude. She sat her horse, and managed it with such graceful ease, she was so handsome in arms, her countenance was so bright and happy, her few words were so brave and confident in God, that they caught hope from her enthusiasm, and began to feel themselves with her invincible as men under the immediate protection and guidance of heaven.

The following day, when she quitted Orleans

early, and rode into the fields with La Hire to make a *reconnaissance* round the English camp and fortifications, the people ran after her in crowds again, so much delight had they in watching her, and in being near her. She did not come back until evening, when she went to the church of Belle-Croix, and heard vespers.

The Tuesday was the Fête of the Cathedral; and the Maid had enough to do to receive the visitors who waited upon her from morning until night. When she was in-doors, she was obliged to hold open court. There came priests, who had seen her weep during mass at the elevation of the *host;* to whom she said, when questioned of her mission, that she had no confidence save only in God. There came soldiers and citizens, and citizens' wives, and ladies of rank, and Jeanne impressed them all alike as being very youthful, brave, generous, high-spirited, simple-minded, devout, and modest. Her fastidious personal habits, her dignity of self-respect, her innocence, which was not ignorance, compelled the reverence and admiration of every one who approached her; and those traits in her which were more peculiarly feminine, attracted their affection. She loved her beautiful horses, her beautiful armour; she delighted in her Standard; she put on the Duke of Orleans' colours, whose city she had come to deliver; and had the nettle, which formed part of his livery,

embroidered as a border to her tunics. Her ordinary garb was the *huque*, a blouse of rich cloth descending to the knee, which, when in camp, she wore over her armour, and at other times under a *lévite*—a long, flowing, sleeved mantle. Such a *huque* and *lévite* were made for her in Orleans, as a gift from the duke; the *huque* being of dark green, nearly black, and the *lévite* of fine cramoisie Brussels cloth, lined with white satin. The rest of the suit was also of white satin. The only part of her armour that much fatigued her was her casque; and in Orleans, except when engaged in actual fighting, she wore instead a hat of blue satin, bound and looped with four braids of gold.

It was charged on Jeanne, in her adversity, as a crime and a token of human pride, that she wore costly armour and costly clothing, and loved to go delicately and daintily clad. But all her bravery of attire was the gift of some prince, or some city that wanted to do her honour, and could hardly find the way; for she had no personal ambition, no selfish greed, no object but to serve France—and beyond that, no *vision*. Of the king, she never required anything but good arms, good horses, and money to pay the people of her household; and when her judges, near her death, asked her what wage or reward she had looked for from God for doing His work, she told them that she had looked for nothing but the salvation of her soul.

Thus moved by love of country,—the noblest inspiration that can animate men,—and leaning on the Power that rules and overrules the world, the loyal Maid entered on her mission, and fulfilled it gloriously—not the less gloriously that her earthly reward was the cup of tears, the crown of thorns, and the fiery cross of martyrdom.

On Wednesday, the 4th of May, Dunois, De Boussac, D'Aulon, and several knights besides, returned through the Beauce, from Blois, with the army and another large convoy of provisions. The priests, carrying their banner, and chanting sacred antiphonies, preceded the march, as before. The Maid went out to meet them as far as the forest of Orleans, passing near the English bastile *Paris* without any impediment; and as they drew near to the city, the people rushed in crowds to welcome them. No more time was to be lost. The soldiers rested and refreshed themselves, while a brief council of war was held. An assault on the bastile of Saint-Loup was ordered for the afternoon; and the men went to the Hôtel de Ville, hard by the cathedral, to get ready scaling-ladders and other equipments necessary for a storm.

Meanwhile Jeanne dined with her host's family and Jean d'Aulon. They had hardly risen from table when in came Dunois, to tell her that he had just heard Sir John Falstaff, who had given the French

such a terrible defeat at Rouvray-Saint-Denis, was marching again to the English camp, with fresh reinforcements, and succours to victual the men; and that he was already at Yenville. The Maid was highly delighted at this chance of a meeting with the victorious knight, and exclaimed in a tone half jest, half earnest, quite in unison with her martial character: "Bastard, bastard! as soon as thou hearest that he is near, let me be told; for if he pass without my knowing, by my Martin, I will have thy head taken off!" Dunois, laughing, bade her never doubt but he would warn her in good time.

When he was gone, Jeanne lay down on a couch to repose a little, Karlotte by her; and Jean d'Aulon, who was tired with his morning's ride, lay down also in the same room, and fell asleep. But scarcely had he rested ten minutes, when up sprang the Maid, and with a great noise awoke him.

"My *counsel* tells me to rise, and go out against the English," cried she. "The blood of our people is running upon the ground!" While she was speaking, a loud clamour in the distance, which had disturbed her first, increased; and there was a cry in the street that the enemy were falling on the French with great damage.

"Where are they who should arm me?" said Jeanne; and immediately Dame Boucher and little

Karlotte made haste to bring her cuirass and casque, her greaves and spurs and sword, while D'Aulon equipped her from head to heel.

The moment she was ready, without waiting for her equerry, she dashed down stairs into the street, and sprang upon her horse, which Louis de Contes was leading up at his leisure. When she was mounted, she called for her Standard. The page ran to her chamber, and gave it to her from the window; whence her hostess, with some other ladies and her chaplain, watched her gallop off, her horse's hoofs striking sparks from the stones, in the direction of the gate of Burgundy, where the tumult chiefly was. D'Aulon armed himself hurriedly, and followed her with Louis de Contes; but she was already in the press about the gate when he overtook her. Some soldiers were at the moment bringing in a man very badly wounded. Jeanne asked those who were carrying him what he was. They told her he was a citizen of Orleans; and shuddering, she said: "I never see the blood of a Frenchman, but the hair of my head stands up!"

The alarm was now ringing from the belfry of the city; and troops of soldiers were hastening from all points to the support of the small force which had gone out unbidden to the attack on Saint-Loup, proposing to achieve some notable success by itself alone. The Maid and D'Aulon

joined themselves to Dunois' company, and rode fast to the scene of conflict. There were in the fortress only about a hundred and sixty combatants; but a considerable body of soldiers had swarmed out of the bastiles *Paris* and *Rouen* to their aid, led by Sir John Talbot. Once they had driven back the French in confusion almost to their walls, when La Hire and Poton de Saintrailles came rushing to the succour of their comrades. The *mêlée* was at the thickest when Dunois appeared, and the Maid, with her Standard flying, rode up under the walls of Saint-Loup, and halted on the brink of the fossé.

In Jeanne's face there was an ardent, inexplicable look, which the English soldiers never learnt to brave. Talbot's men saw her; turned, and fled back into their entrenchments and bastiles. Nothing could prevail on them to come out again. The garrison of Saint-Loup, thus abandoned, yet made a desperate defence. The French made as furious an assault. When it had lasted about three hours, the English cried out that they would surrender.

But the Maid had warned them. She had said: "If we have war, let it be *war;* and if peace, *peace.*" She commanded the assault to be pressed. The bastile was taken, and nearly all in it were put to the sword.

The blood of an enemy did not make Jeanne's

hair rise nor her flesh creep. She went into the old fortified church amongst the dead and dying English; and climbed up into the bell-tower with her companions-in-arms, after the fugitives trying to escape. Thither had fled some priests, or others who had donned priests' vestments for safeguard. The victors were about to slay them, when Jeanne interposed, and ordered that they should be conducted unharmed into Orleans; for a priest was sacred—friend or foe. About forty prisoners besides were saved from the slaughter, who accompanied them.

The French took out of Saint-Loup all the spoils worth having, and then set the bastile on fire; while the people of the city ran to the churches in crowds to return thanks to God, and to set their bells a-ringing. In the midst of the joyous confusion, the Maid, towards dusk, rode back into Orleans, with the great lords and captains and men-at-arms, all mightily exhilarated with this beginning of victories. Dunois said that before Jeanne's coming, two hundred English could beat a thousand French; but after it, four or five hundred French could defy all the English power.

The old English courage, indeed, was under a spell.

The fortress of Saint-Loup was captured on the Eve of the Ascension; and Jeanne's fury of battle

spent, very woeful was she for the men who had died unannealed. On the morrow, in honour of the feast which celebrated the consummation of Christ's work on earth, she commanded that none should go out to fight, but that all should rest in God, and prepare themselves for the next day's conflict by confession and devout prayer. She herself did so, and received the Eucharist.

In the afternoon, all the captains assembled at the treasurer's house to hold a council of war. The Maid was not called to it this time until the captains had agreed what they would do—which was to make a *feint* against one of the great fortresses in the Beauce, to draw the English over the Loire from the Solonge, when a strong party was to be ready to storm the bastiles they had quitted. Some of the council were unwilling that Jeanne should be told of their plans, lest, woman-like, she should reveal them; others were perhaps stirred by the natural feeling of brave men, that she would be in the way if she insisted on going with them. The proofs of coolness, intrepidity, and courage she had already displayed, could not convince narrow and jealous minds of her superior genius; and they were as enraged as they were amazed at the ease and completeness with which she supported her martial state. Her guard were proud of her, and declared she rode as well, and armed as fast, as any knight in the army, or in the king's court;

and the common men, soldiers and citizens, all alike recognised in her the spring and cause of their new good-fortune.

In spite of the opposition of the doubtful and the reluctant in the council, it was therefore concluded that Jeanne must be told *something*, and Ambrose de Loré was sent to bring her from the society of her hostess into the council chamber. Jacques Boucher, her host, who presided, informed her of the feigned attack that was proposed on the bastiles of the Beauce, without mentioning the ultimate design in it. Jeanne glanced from face to face, and with quick discernment detected that they were again deceiving her.

"Tell me what you have decided to do—I could keep a much greater secret than that!" said she, hotly; and went and came about the room, refusing to be seated.

Dunois perceived that they must trust her, but he took her to task for her temper. "Do not be so impetuous, Jeanne; we cannot tell you all at once," said he, and then explained to her their whole plan. She was less dissatisfied with that, but *feints* were not in her way; she liked an open assault—a fair field and no favour. It came to be remarked afterwards that, when she differed in opinion from the other commanders, if they followed her advice, they followed it to a good issue; and if they thwarted her, and went their own way

defeat befell them. The schemes of the council were no further gainsayed by her at the present, but they were not carried out. A *sortie* against Saint-Jean-le-Blanc was arranged instead.

On leaving the council, the Maid ordered a proclamation to be made, that all the soldiers who meant to fight with her on the morrow should be in a good state of conscience; "for, because of men's sins, God oftentimes permitted battles to be lost." In the evening, she went up to the ramparts of Belle-Croix with her chaplain, and summoned the English once more to depart in peace.

She dictated one of her short, imperative letters, and Father Pasquerel wrote:—

"You men of England, who have no right in the kingdom of France, the King of Heaven sends you word by me, Jeanne the Maid, to quit your fortresses, and retire into your own country, or I will give you such a driving as shall be had in perpetual remembrance. This is for the third and last time that I write to you, and I shall write no more. JHESUS MARIA, Jeanne the Maid."

A postscript was added below:—

"I would send you my letters more honourably, but you keep my heralds. Send me back my herald *Guyenne*, and I will send you some of your people taken in the bastile of Saint-Loup, who are not all dead."

Jeanne tied this summons with a thread round

an arrow, and ordered an archer to shoot it amongst the English on the rampart of the Tournelles, and cry: "Read! news from the Maid!" The archer did as he was bidden; and as soon as the English had read the missive, they raised a great uproar, shouting: "News! news come from the witch of the Armagnacs!" at which Jeanne wept and sobbed, invoking the witness of God against their false and cruel calumnies.

After supper, she told her chaplain that she had heard her *counsel*, and that he must be up early on the morrow to say mass before her and her people, for she should have a great work to do that day.

On that day, May 6th, the bastile which the English had raised on the ruins of the church and monastery of the Augustines, near the southern outlet of the bridge, was taken by storm.

It was about three o'clock of the afternoon when the Maid, Dunois, La Hire, Saintrailles, and a score of captains besides, marched with three thousand soldiers out of Orleans, by the gate of Burgundy, and crossed the river in boats to go to the attack of Saint-Jean-le-Blanc, as it had been pre-concerted. Sir William Glasdale, however, anticipated them by firing the place, and drawing off the soldiers there to strengthen the garrisons in the Tournelles and the bastile of the Augustines. The French leaders suspected some trap in this sudden

retreat. They did not feel themselves of force enough to attack the bastiles of the bridge, and most of them were inclined to return to the city.

But Jeanne d'Arc could not reconcile herself to quitting the field without something done. Supported by La Hire and a few of the most enterprising spirits, she set off straight towards the suburb of the Portereau, and planted her Standard in front of the Augustines. The English stayed behind their walls until she came within close range and view. Then they showed themselves in such numbers that even Dunois said, to attack them would be to rush on certain destruction. At the same moment, a cry arose amongst the soldiers behind that the enemy were pouring out of the entrenchments at Saint-Privé, and coming to the succour of their comrades about the bridge. The retreat was hastily sounded to an island opposite Saint-Jean-le-Blanc, which Jean d'Aulon had been left to guard. The Maid, Dunois, and La Hire kept in the rear, to cover what had very much the appearance of a panic-flight; and no sooner did Glasdale preceive that the French were retiring discouraged, than he commanded a sally in pursuit.

With great shouts the English rushed forth to chase the Maid, calling her all the vile names they could lay their tongues to, Glasdale's execrations rising louder and bitterer than any. Jeanne heard him, faced about furious, spurred her horse, and,

with her Standard held aloft, rode down upon him at speed: La Hire, Dunois, and a few soldiers after her. The English stopt—wavered—recoiled. The French who were retreating rushed back, some who had reached the island, wading through the water up to their arm-pits; and Glasdale and his men hastily regained the shelter of their walls.

Then began a fierce assault on the field-camp, which was protected by a stout palisade; and on the rampart of the Augustines, the Maid's voice of command: "Go in amongst the English boldly, in God's name!" ringing like a silver clarion above the thunder of the cannon, and the defiant shouts of the combatants. She dismounted, and led the way herself, and wherever the strife and struggle were the most furious, there was she seen, striking with the flat of her sword hard and heavy on the enemy, and animating her men by word and example.

The rampart was carried first, but not until after a long defence in which, on both sides, the slaughter was very great. One tall Englishman held a critical post against a crowd of assailants until he was shot down by Master Jean the cannonier, when the French entered with a rush, and the place was won. Such of the garrison as could escape, fled into the Tournelles, but the greater number perished in the heat of the assault. The victors then poured over the fortress exultant, released a

multitude of prisoners whom they found there, and betook themselves to plunder. There was much confusion and disorder amongst the pillagers, and lest the garrison of the Tournelles should be tempted to sally out and attack them at a disadvantage, the Maid ordered the bastile to be set on fire. In the flush of victory, none dared to gainsay her.

A grand day's work had been done, and it was now evening. D'Aulon and Dunois were anxious that Jeanne, who had been wounded in the foot, and who was completely exhausted with fatigue and excitement, should return to sleep in the city: though, to maintain their conquest, it was necessary that the soldiers should keep the field all night. She was very reluctant to leave them for fear of some surprise in her absence.

"By my Martin!" said she, "to-morrow I will have the bastiles of the bridge. I will not re-enter Orleans until it is the king's."

After some urging she was, however, persuaded to go, and they and some others accompanied her home to her lodgings. A proclamation was then made through the city that the people should carry food to the soldiers without the walls, and keep guard, and attend their horses while they took some repose.

Meantime a council of war was called, to which some of the chief citizens were summoned; and

Jeanne, who had not broken her fast all day,—it was Friday,—went to supper with her hostess and her chaplain. After supper, one of the principal commanders visited her, to announce the result of their deliberations. He told her their victory that day was a signal mercy of God; but the great lords and captains were all of opinion—considering the city was now well victualled—that they had better be content to hold it for the present, waiting fresh reinforcements from the king. With the strength they had left, it was not deemed expedient to attack again on the morrow.

This revival of leisurely warfare was not at all to the Maid's mind. "You have been in your council, and I have been in mine," said she; "and I believe my *counsel* will hold and prevail, while yours will come to nought." Then turning to her chaplain, she added: "Be up in the morning before sunrise—the earliest you can—to sing mass; for we shall do more to-morrow than to-day. And keep you always near me; for I shall be wounded and shall have blood upon my breast."

The Maid's work on the morrow was the capture of the Tournelles.

That night was a very disturbed night in Orleans. The English in the redoubt at Saint-Privé attempted to escape across the river to join the camp in the Beauce, and were, many of them,

drowned, as was known afterwards by the finding of their armour in the water at that point of the stream. They set the place on fire before abandoning it, and the sight of the flames occasioned much anxiety in the city, it being difficult in the darkness to discover from what they arose.

The spiritless conclusion to which the council of war had brought its deliberations was as little satisfactory to the mass of the citizens and soldiers in Orleans as it was to the Maid. She passed a restless night—the treasurer's house, in fact, seemed never to have slept at all; for every one in it was up before dawn with herself. She heard prayers with her people, and was arming to return to the soldiers, when a number of the citizens, who, since the taking of Saint-Loup and the Augustines, had made up their minds that she could accomplish for Orleans the deliverance she had promised, whether the lords and captains supported her or not, came to her lodgings to require that she would go on to fulfil the charge she had received from God and the king, without waiting for any further succour.

Jeanne desired no better. "By my Martin, I will do it, and who loves me will follow me!" responded she with gay confidence, and ordered her horse at once for a start.

Her hostess begged her at least to eat something before she went. A shad had been just sent in for

her breakfast, and Jacques Boucher, aware of the determination of the council of war, and anxious to keep Jeanne where she was, proposed that they should stay and eat that. But Jeanne's work would bide no delay, and her excitement was meat and drink to her.

"By my Martin!" replied she, "we will not eat it until supper, when we will come back across the bridge and bring a *goddam*, who shall eat his share with us."

Carrying her Standard, and accompanied by her chaplain and Louis de Contes, Jeanne mounted her horse, and rode off towards the gate of Burgundy, more citizens and soldiers gathering on her course at every step as she went. In anticipation of some such event as this, the gate of Burgundy had been intrusted to keep to Raoul de Gaucourt, as the commander of highest rank, and also of the highest reputation for firmness. He was there on guard with a troop of men-at-arms; and when the Maid presented herself with her mob of tumultuous followers, he declared that not one should pass. Shouts of rage and menace rose amongst the people, and for some moments the life of the old warrior was in peril from their fury. Jeanne peremptorily commanded that the gate should be opened. Her soldiers precipitated themselves forward to obey her, and De Gaucourt's did not venture to resist. The gate was set wide, and a smaller

gate near it was also forced. The angry commander warned Jeanne that she was leading the people into peril by her rashness; but he might as well have warned the wind not to blow, as the Maid not to work.

She was very indignant at his opposition, and defied him to his teeth. "You are not a true man to the king," said she. "But with your will, or without your will, my people shall go forth and fight; and shall win again to-day, as they won yesterday!" And with that she dashed out at the gate, the mob of soldiers and citizens rushing after her, wave upon wave, down to the river-side. The sun was just breaking through the purple clouds of dawn as she crossed the Loire, and, remounting on the opposite bank, rode forward to rejoin the captains, left in charge of the troops, who had camped all night before the fortifications of the bridge.

They met at once in council; and when it was found that the Maid would not be turned from her purpose of giving assault on the Tournelles that day, the least willing prepared to do their duty in supporting her. Few were sanguine of success, and many believed it to be quite hopeless. But Jeanne and the people were full of confidence. God was now on their side, and none could make them afraid.

It was determined to assemble all the force that could be spared out of the city, and then to give a general attack on the new rampart towards the

Solonge, which the English had raised on the ruins of the Portereau, to cover the drawbridge leading from the river-shore to the forts. This rampart was thought almost impregnable. It was very long and very strong; garnished with the best artillery, and garrisoned by the best soldiers the English had. It would take seven days, at least, to reduce it, some of the French veterans said.

The citizens of Orleans worked well that day, and put all their heart into their work. They began to see a near end to their long troubles. Some brought out cannon and culverins, arrows and ammunition, food and drink, for the soldiers in the field; while others went to construct a flying-bridge for the assault of the Tournelles on the side towards the rampart of Belle-Croix, when the Portereau should have been taken. A third party loaded a boat with bones, faggots, old shoes, and sulphur, and steered it under the one stone arch that united the forts and the drawbridge, and there set it on fire. The smoke and noisome stench were an excessive annoyance to the English defending the rampart, while the heat and flames calcined the mortar and stones of the arch above the burning boat, and prepared it for a fall.

All these operations took time; and it was not until ten o'clock that the troops were set in order of battle, and the trumpets sounded for the assault. When they did sound, however, the attack was

furious, and at all points steady and stanch for hours. With Glasdale, on the rampart, were about eight hundred English soldiers, the pith of the besieging army,—all well convinced that if they lost the Tournelles, they lost Orleans, and their seven months' toil would go for less than nothing. They fought, at first, splendidly; the best and bravest of the French returned to the charge again and again, but were perpetually flung back. They showed now, however, courage to persist,—that obstinate courage that had lacked to them for many a day, —the one invaluable quality of soldiers in which the English had ever surpassed them, and all others.

It was the Maid who inspired them. She rode hither and thither, her Standard fluttering over her, encouraging her men, making them rest and refresh themselves by turns, and bidding them never doubt but the place should be theirs at last. She rallied the flying, spurred the laggard, was herself most conspicuous wherever danger was most imminent. To and fro in the storm of fire along the shore, where flash answered to flash and thunder to thunder, where through the volleying clouds of smoke whistled the shrill arrows, sowing the bloody plain with death, went she, calm, valiant, beautiful; constant, strong, untiring.

She saw knight striving hand to hand with knight, and man-at-arms with man-at-arms. She

saw the dead and dying cumbering the fossé where they had aimed to win the wall; and fired with the passion of the bravest, she dismounted, rushed into the thick of the fight, seized a ladder, and was the first to gain the rampart, and rear it up. Her foot was on the rung to mount, her voice was raised to cheer her men, when suddenly an arrow shot through the air, and pierced her above the breast. The pain was quick and keen, tears swelled into her eyes. Those who saw her fall, ran, and carried her out of the tumult of the battle, and laid her almost fainting upon the grass.

Dunois, D'Aulon, her chaplain, Louis de Contes, and many more, came crowding anxiously about her; some, discouraged, proposing to abandon the assault, and take her into the city; others offering to *charm* the wound with a magical form of words in use amongst the superstitious soldiers. Jeanne entreated them to stand to their duty, and to begone with their incantations. Then, with an effort, she controlled her tears, looked up brightly, declared she was comforted; and her cuirass being removed, the arrow, which had passed through between her neck and shoulder, was drawn out. A gush of blood followed it, and the men began to show their fear and pity for her again. They asked her if she should die of the wound.

"I know I shall die one day," replied she, "but I know neither where, nor when, nor how; and if I

can have a sinless remedy for my hurt, I would fain be healed."

Some cotton dipped in olive oil was applied to stanch the blood. Jeanne then begged those who surrounded her to leave her with her chaplain. She confessed herself to him, having omitted it in her haste to set out in the morning. She then insisted on resuming her cuirass, and returning to the assault, her absence and the news of her wound having begun to spread consternation amongst the soldiers.

Her appearance reanimated the men, and her own pain and fatigue seemed to pass when she was again in the midst of them. For nearly three hours longer the assault was hotly pressed, and as fiercely repulsed. Dunois and the most ardent of the captains began to think then that there was no hope of success. They proposed to the Maid to draw off into the city; for the men were evidently overtasked and weary. She entreated them to endure a little longer, to let the soldiers eat and drink; for she saw that the strength of the English was being fast spent, their firing was become wild and ineffective: "a man would have thrown a ball with his hand with as much force as their guns:" and the bastiles would certainly be taken if they persevered. Thus urged, Dunois yielded to Jeanne's will, and when the men had refreshed themselves, she exhorted them, saying, "Return,

in the name of God, to the assault once again. The English have no more power to defend themselves, and you shall have both the rampart and the Tournelles. Only go in against them boldly." Then mounting her horse, she rode off to a little vineyard out of the clamour of the fighting, prayed for five or six minutes, and came back exultant.

Seizing her Standard, she rushed to the brink of the fossé, crying out, "Yield, Glasdale, yield! Thou didst call me *witch!* Oh! I have great pity on thy soul, and all of thine!" Her Standard floated towards the fort. The English on the rampart were smitten with panic-fear. She called to her soldiers: "In, children, in God's name! They are ours!" And like birds over a bush, the French swarmed over the walls, and the rampart was won.

Glasdale and some thirty knights and men with him fled for the Tournelles. They crossed the drawbridge in safety, but when they rushed upon the arch of stone which had been smouldering since morning, it gave way with a terrible crash, and they were all precipitated into the river. The weight of their armour sunk them at once, and they vanished out of sight. Jeanne beheld their sudden and dreadful end, and uttered a cry of pity, then burst into tears, far more passionate and bitter than she had shed for herself. But while she wept men worked. Nicole de Girème, the gallant knight of Rhodes, was leading an attack on the Tournelles

from the rampart of Belle-Croix. Over the breach in the bridge had been thrown an old wooden gutter, which, as it fell three feet short of the requisite length, had been skilfully pieced by a carpenter. Across this narrow and dangerous passage some brave men followed the knight, and about six o'clock, the Tournelles, assailed on all sides, were taken. The last of the English were then swept out of the Solonge. Not one was left on the southern side of the Loire. Such of the garrison as were not killed or drowned in the river were led prisoners into Orleans, coupled in pairs; and it was not without difficulty the people were withheld from massacring them. Suffolk and Talbot had witnessed the whole long day's struggle from some of their bastiles in the Beauce; but they did not attempt to make a diversion by attacking the almost neglected city, nor did they stir to bring any succour to their brave and fated comrades defending the forts of the bridge. The men would not move — what was the good of fighting against *witchcraft?*

The capture of the Tournelles was the finest feat of arms any soldier who helped in it had ever witnessed. Glory to God and the Maid! The voices of the people made the air resound with her name. She had promised to return into Orleans across the bridge. Hundreds of hands went hastily to work to repair its breaches, that she might pass

over in triumph safely. From the lofty towers of the cathedral, from every steeple in the city, the bells rang out victoriously; and when the Maid rode in at sunset, the people received her with acclamations such as befitted their great deliverance.

Dunois and several other gentlemen attended her to her lodgings, and the passage was one song of praise and rejoicing. She was tired and suffering, but her heart was glad. She had worked, and God had worked with her, fulfilling His promise given by her *voices*. She must have heard them in the loud pealing of the bells that night; for it was in the pealing of bells she heard them best:—*Go on, daughter of God, I will be with thee to help thee; go on, go on.*

Arrived at the treasurer's house, D'Aulon immediately unarmed Jeanne, and had her wound, which was extremely painful, carefully re-dressed by a surgeon. Dunois also stayed, and saw her eat her supper of bread and wine and water;—throughout the day she had taken nothing except bread. It was a marvel to Louis de Contes, who served her, how long she could go without food, and what simple food she preferred; never eating more than twice in the twenty-four hours. The army was to camp in the fields that night again, but Jeanne went to bed and to sleep willingly enough; and slept until she was awakened in the morning with the news that there was a great stir amongst the

English in the Beauce, but whether it meant retreat or attack, nobody could tell.

Up rose she from her pillow, and as, because of the tenderness of her wound, she could not wear her cuirass, she put on a light, flexible coat of mail, and went out beyond the walls, where all the soldiers were assembling, in expectation of battle. They were very eager to advance on the enemy and fight; but Jeanne restrained them, bade them form in good order and wait, and hear a mass before they moved. A portable altar was brought out into the fields, and a company of priests appeared and sang the office, all the men devoutly attending.

The stir in the English camp still continued, and there was some sign that Suffolk and Talbot meant to challenge the Maid. Jeanne looked out long towards them, and when the first mass was done, bade the priests sing a second. That also ended, she inquired which way the English were setting their faces—towards Orleans, or away from it. She was told that they were marching away from it, and going towards the castle of Meun.

"Then, in the name of God, let them go!" replied she, "and let us return thanks to the Lord. We will not pursue them, nor kill them; for to-day is Sunday."

And thus, on the 8th of May, the tenth day

after the arrival of the Maid, was the siege of Orleans raised. The English departed in good order, with flags flying and trumpets sounding, to Meun, Jargeau, and Beaugency. They left behind their sick and wounded, and great spoils of war, but they carried off all their prisoners who were able to march. The mob of soldiers and citizens were wild to run after them in pursuit, but Jeanne was peremptory. "Let them go," said she; "it is enough that they *go!*"

La Hire and Ambrose de Loré, with about a hundred lances, rode after them three leagues, to observe their retreat; and Florent d'Illiers galloped off to Châteaudun, of which he was governor, carrying his troop with him, to defend it, in case the enemy should attack it in passing; but the rest of the commanders stayed in Orleans with the Maid, and went presently to hear high mass in the cathedral, and a *Te deum* sung and sermon preached, to celebrate the deliverance of the city.

After the sermon, a solemn procession of the clergy, nobles, captains, soldiers, and citizens, bearing each one a lighted taper, was made round Orleans, and prayers were said and praises to God sung in all the places where the enemy had fortified themselves against it.

"*Antiphony.* Our enemies are gathered together, and boast themselves in their strength. Lord, bring to nought their strength, and scatter them;

for there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God.

"Abase their pride, and lower their presumption.

"Drive them hither and thither, and carry them utterly away.

"Lord, hear our prayer.

"And let our cry come unto Thee.

"*Let us pray.*

"O God, the author of peace, who without bow and arrow can expel the enemies of those who hope in Thee, come to our help; be favourable to us in our adversity; and inasmuch as Thou hast delivered Thy people by the hand of a woman, so, for Charles, our king, lift up the arm of victory, that the foe, who trust in the multitude of their archers, and glorify themselves in their spearmen, may presently be overcome; and to Thee, who art the way, the truth, and the life, all the people shall give praise, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

It is more than four centuries gone; but Orleans still keeps the day of its deliverance, a festival in honour of God and the Maid.

Clement de Fauquemberque, clerk to the Parliament of Paris under the English dominion, has left recorded on one of the registers in his charge a few historical notes, written under the impression of passing events, which betray the agonies of the

regent's government after this beginning of reverse in France. Thus he writes of the raising of the siege of Orleans.

"Tuesday, X day of May, it was publicly reported and said in Paris, that on Sunday last past, the people of the dauphin, in great numbers, after several assaults, continually pressed by force of arms, had entered into the bastile, held by Sir William Glasdale, and into the tower of the bridge of Orleans, beyond the Loire; and that on the same day the other captains and men-at-arms, holding the fortresses on this side the Loire before the city, had raised their siege, and gone to assist Glasdale and his comrades, and to fight the enemy, who had in their company a Maid, the only one bearing banner."

Over-against this note—the imperfect echo of a great disaster—is a fanciful pen-sketch of the clerk's; a half-length figure of a woman in profile with long hair and in a female dress, carrying a sword in one hand, and in the other a banner, with the monogram, JHESUS.

VIII.

THE SWEEPING OF THE ORLEANAIS.

HERALDS had been despatched from Orleans daily to the king at Chinon, to report the progress of events, and, on the 10th of May, two gentlemen brought him news that the siege was raised. Letters were immediately written in his name, and under his hand and seal, to the cities of Narbonne and Rochelle, to announce the glorious tidings, which flew fast through all the towns and provinces in his obedience, bringing gladness to every loyal heart. After giving a brief but explicit narrative of the successive captures of the English bastiles, Charlès thus renders homage to God and the Maid :—

"More than ever ought we to thank our Creator, who, of His divine clemency, has not left us in forgetfulness ; and we cannot enough honour the virtuous and marvellous deeds which are reported

to us of the Maid, who was always present in person at the execution of these things."

On the Monday, without seeking any rest from her labours, Jeanne d'Arc gave the blue satin hat which she had worn in Orleans, for a keepsake to her hostess, the treasurer's wife, kissed her little bedfellow, Karlotte, and while the priests were saying masses for the dead in all the churches, bade the delivered city farewell, and rode out of the gate towards Blois to return to the king. She was attended by Dunois, La Hire, and a splendid following of nobles, knights, and men-at-arms; and all her journey was one triumph. She had given her promised sign that God had sent her, and she was everywhere welcomed and honoured as the special minister of His merciful and gracious providence. From Blois, she proceeded to Tours, whither the king came to meet her. When she saw him approaching, she took her Standard, and riding forward a little in advance, inclined her head reverently before him. Gharles bade her look up, and the people thought he would have embraced her for the joy he felt.

Unfortunately for himself and for France, all the king's joys and woes, how vivid soever, were but very short-lived. He was especially one of those princes in whom it is not good for men to put their trust. A whisper, a sneer, from Georges de la Trémouille, a pious suggestion of doubt from the

Archbishop of Rheims, who was as fluctuating in opinion as himself, even now served to disturb his confidence in Jeanne d'Arc. His mind was never long in one stay, and while the populace were hailing the Maid as the greatest saint since the blessed Mary, while the clergy were singing masses and saying prayers in her behalf, he began to hesitate again, to hold councils, and to deliberate much as he had done before he consented to employ her at all.

Meantime the English were bruiting Jeanne's fame abroad as a witch, a sorceress, an enchantress, a limb of the devil; which accusations were intended to modify the shame and dishonour they had incurred at her hands before Orleans. She had rejoined the king on the Wednesday before Whitsuntide, and the Saturday following—only six days after the raising of the siege—there was printed at Lyons, a brief treatise in her favour, written by Jean de Gerson, the *Most Christian Doctor*,* who was spending the last months of his life in a convent of Celestine monks in that city. It was composed with a view to defeating the aspersions of her humiliated adversaries, and of confirming Charles and his party in their good opinion of her. The famous divine writes to this effect:—

"One may piously and wisely maintain the vocation of the Maid Jeanne, having regard to the circumstances, to the effect that results from them,

* To him some writers attributed the famous *Imitation of Christ.*

and, above all, to the justice of the cause she defends—which is to restore a kingdom to its rightful king, and to expel his enemies." He then calls to witness the piety and prudence of her behaviour from her tenderest childhood, of which the king had received ample proof. "She seeks neither worldly honours nor worldly men; she abhors hatreds, seditions, revenges, and vanities; she lives in the spirit of prayer, in works of grace, in holiness and justice. She employs none of the means forbidden by the Church; no surprises, no deceits, and she has in view no hope of gain. She is seen to be very firm in her faith; for she exposes her body to wounds without taking any extraordinary precautions to save herself. Warriors obey her willingly, and risk the dangers of war without fearing the disgrace which would fall on them were they beaten, having a woman to lead them. The enemy, on the contrary, fly at her approach, and terror comes upon them, and crying as on a woman in travail. No legitimate reproach can be made her for the male habit she wears. She clothes herself as a warrior to fight the foes of justice, to defend the French, to prove that God can, when He will, confound the mightiest by the hand of a woman."

The Maid was soon weary of the inaction of the court. Her work was urgent, and she told the king

more than once that it behoved her to press on with what she had to accomplish; for her time would not be much longer than a year. She wished him to set forward at once to Rheims; but the few in the council who governed all, advised that before attempting that dangerous march, the English should be swept from the valley of the Loire. While they were talking the king into that opinion, the army which had been laboriously collected to deliver Orleans rapidly dissolved, and it was some weeks before another could be got on foot. Charles retired, meantime, to the castle of Loches, glad to rest in peace on his unwonted good fortune.

Jeanne accompanied the court to Loches. One day, while there, it happened that the Abbot of Talmont, who had been amongst her examiners at Poitiers, was riding with her when the populace came crowding about her, as they now always did, kissing her hands and feet, pressing to touch her horse, to touch her clothes, some even kneeling as she passed. The abbot rebuked her, saying, such honours did not belong to her, and she ought not to suffer them, but to guard herself from them; for to permit them was to lead simple people into idolatry. Jeanne was grieved enough, but she could not bear to repulse their affection. "In truth," said she, "I know not how to keep me, unless God will keep me,"—a reply which the abbot often quoted afterwards.

The month of May drew to an end, and Jeanne was still wearying unoccupied at court. At last, in her own intrepid fashion, she tried to bring Charles over to her opinion about the expedience of going to Rheims. Dunois had arrived at Loches on the business of the army that was to make the campaign of the Loire, but Jeanne wanted that to be deferred until after the coronation. She said that when the king was crowned, the power of his enemies would go to decay, and they would do little more in injuring the kingdom. Possessed with this belief, one afternoon, when the king was in his private room with his confessor Gerard Machet, afterwards Bishop of Castres, Christopher de Harcourt, Grand-master of the Forests, and an honest old councillor, Robert le Maçon, she went and knocked at the door. On being bidden to enter, she approached Charles, knelt down, and embracing his knees, said, "Noble Dauphin, do not hold so many or such tedious councils, but come quickly to the city of Rheims and receive your crown."

Christopher de Harcourt asked if her *counsel* had bidden her to act thus. She said it had, and that continually it spurred her to carry on the work that was given her to do.

"Will you tell us here, in the king's presence, in what manner your *counsel* speaks when it talks with you?" continued he.

Jeanne blushed, and answered him emphatically,

"In my own mind I conceive what you wish to know, and I will tell you."

The king interposed, and said, "Jeanne, does it please you to declare it before these witnesses?"

She said that it did, and then went on to tell them that when she was unhappy because ready credence was not given to her messages on the part of God, she went aside and entreated Him, complaining that they to whom she brought them were so slow of belief; and after she had made her prayer, she always heard a *voice* saying to her: *Go on, daughter of God; I will be with thee, to help thee; go on, go on.* She added, that when she heard the *voice* she was rejoiced beyond expression, and would fain have continued always in that state. And in repeating the words of her *counsel*, she raised her eyes to heaven with a look of ecstasy that none of the witnesses ever forgot.

Jeanne, however, did not prevail with Charles. He promised to go to Rheims after the country round about Orleans should have been cleared of the English, but he would not move before. She was obliged to be satisfied with this pledge. The council matured its plans at last, and the Duke of Alençon, who had succeeded in redeeming his hostages, was appointed to the chief command of the little army which was to dispossess the English of their fortified towns in the Orleanais—Jergeau, Meun, Beaugency, and Yenville. The Maid

was to go on the campaign with him, and at the beginning of June she was with all her people at Selles in Berry, the king being at Saint-Aignan. At Selles the troops were to assemble, and on Monday, the 6th of the month, Charles set out to go thither himself, having in his company two young gentlemen, kinsmen of the wife of Georges de la Trémouille, Gui and André de Laval, who had come with a small number of retainers to join the army.

The king had sent a messenger on before to bid the Maid ride out and meet him. Jeanne went, armed at all points, and carrying her lance in her hand. She returned to Selles with Charles, and the two young brothers afterwards visited her at her lodgings. She ordered wine to be brought, and talking with them gaily, promised that by and by they should drink wine with her in Paris. Gui thought her divine to look at and listen to, and congratulated himself highly on his good fortune in seeing her. She gave him a message to the Dame de Laval, his grandmother, (who had done her some kindness,) about a small gold ring which she had sent her—only a little thing, Jeanne said it was, and she wished it had been better. Any gift from her was, however, held as almost sacred now —even her *touch* was supposed to sanctify, and to add a precious value to ring or amulet.

In the evening she left Selles to go to Romoran-

tin with marshal de Boussac, and a body of men-at-arms. Gui de Laval went to see her set off. He found a great black charger, a high-spirited restive beast, being led to and fro in front of her lodgings, and presently she came out, armed all in white, except her head, and with a little axe in her hand.

The horse would not stand for her to mount, and after some contention with him, she said, "Lead him to the Cross," which was opposite the church, a short distance off. "And there," says Gui de Laval, writing an account of the scene to his mother, "she mounted without his stirring any more than if he were bound."

Upon the steps of the church were standing some priests, to whom she said, in a pleasant, womanly voice, modulated into a tone of command, "You, priests and churchmen, make your processions and prayers to God." Then addressing herself to the road once more, she cried to the soldiers, "Ride forward! ride forward!" and so set out, her brother Pierre armed all in white like herself beside her, and Louis de Contes carrying her Standard folded up.

During the campaign on the Loire, Jeanne d'Arc made her head-quarters at Orleans, and when she returned thither with the Duke of Alençon and their company, exactly a month after her first adieu, all the city poured out to welcome her.

Alençon, an experienced soldier, viewed the bastiles she had captured from the English, and declared her success to be nothing less than marvellous. He believed he could have held the fort of the Augustines and the towers of the bridge for a week with a few men against an army.

It would not have been safe in Orleans to attribute the Maid's victories to the powers of darkness, but the English prisoners had given out some very strange things there—strange enough to account for and excuse all the defeats and disasters that had befallen their arms. Like drunken men, they had seen double the number of soldiers the French had. Never were set in battle-array such an endless multitude of men-at-arms as assaulted the Portereau. And in the midst of them, directing their movements, appeared a glorious white figure like an angel—doubtless Jeanne herself. Also on the bridge were two shining shapes like bishops, the patron saints of the city, St Aignan and St Evurtre. Who that fought only with arm of flesh could withstand a host thus marshalled? Who, indeed? The citizens accepted the plea in devout faith, and paid new honours to their guardian saints who had graciously assisted the valiant efforts of the Maid and her soldiers for the deliverance of their city.

A coil of temptations and dangers was already beginning to weave itself for Jeanne's feet out of

the very love and gratitude of those she had succoured. Neither soldiers nor citizens seemed able to laud and honour her enough. The populace, in their raptures of admiration, treated her as a creature more divine than human. In some of the humbler churches, statues were even erected to her renown. Jeanne's humility was always towards God, not towards man; and the veneration that was paid her she suffered as paid to her work done on God's part. She said often to her chaplain that it was but a *ministry;* and when he once observed to her that such a mission as hers had never been seen in the world before, and that in no book were such deeds as hers recorded, she only answered, "My Lord has a book in which no scholar can read, let him be ever so learned."

She had distinctly announced from the beginning that she was not come to show signs—to do miracles. She required means for her ends. How unwearyingly she toiled in her vocation was evident to all who chose to see it. Her success hung on the faith and honest endeavours of those who had to labour with her, and already she had learned by the vacillation of the king what a slight prop was the strongest she had to rely on. But her confidence in God and her good cause never failed; and for the bitter drops men pressed into her cup, she drank them in silence and secresy. What she had done for Orleans made popular expectation

boundless, avid, cruel; but she would not risk her influence by putting a curb on it. The multitude rejoiced in the easy belief that success in the war depended on her only, and they pleased themselves by adoring her. In her heart she was grieved, but in her behaviour there appeared nothing save calm assurance. When crowds thronged her steps, exulting in her triumphs, she spoke comfortably to them, bidding them trust God, and God would give peace to France. When under arms, she talked always gaily and hopefully to the soldiers, promising them many things that were never realised; but all the captains were ready to admit that in assembling them, forming them in order to fight, and keeping them at it, she had not her equal in the army. How her enthusiasm and intrepidity had roused and rekindled the dormant spirit of Charles's party, was soon the talk of all France and all Europe; and the English, beaten and abolished before her, could only encourage themselves by reiterating the suspicious assertion that she prevailed by magic arts, false enchantments, and foul sorceries; which served as a plea also for their being most horribly afraid of her.

Opinions differed with men's interests as to what power helped the Maid, but all save born sceptics were certainly agreed that she must be helped by some supernatural power. Her works could not be the works of a simple woman. The Duke of

Brittany, whose policy it had always been to change sides as the luck changed, startled by Jeanne's rapid successes before Orleans, began to think that the time was come to abandon the English, and carry his sturdy Breton soldiers over into Charles's service. He lay sick himself at Nantes, but he sent an embassy to congratulate the Maid on her redoubtable deeds, and through her to pave the way for his reconciliation with the king. His envoy was his confessor, Yves Milbeau, who, on presenting himself to Jeanne, solemnly adjured her in his patron's name to tell him whether she was, indeed, sent on the part of God to deliver France. She replied that she was.

"If it be so," said the confessor, "my sovereign lord, the Duke of Brittany, will despatch aid to the king. He cannot come himself because of his infirmity, but he will send his eldest son with a large army."

"The Duke of Brittany is not your sovereign lord," returned Jeanne, in her uncompromising tone. "King Charles is your sovereign lord, and the duke ought not to have delayed so long in sending his people to his service."

The monkish envoy reported favourably of the Maid, notwithstanding her rebuke to himself and his master, and the duke shortly afterwards sent her a gift of a beautiful dagger and several valuable horses by two knights and a herald-at-arms who

were going on his business to the king. Jeanne's wise and Christian policy of reuniting the alienated princes of France to the crown was prospering well; and many noblemen and gentlemen who had hitherto held aloof from the war, came into Orleans with their retainers to join in the campaign for sweeping the English out of the fortified places they occupied round about it.

It was after dinner on Saturday, June 11th, when the Maid marched out of Orleans on her second great expedition. She was accompanied by the Duke of Alençon, De Gaucourt, Dunois, La Hire, Saintrailles, De Boussac, Florent d'Illiers, Jamet de Tilloy, and most of the captains who had fought with her at the raising of the siege. Carrying with them a train of artillery, and all things necessary for an assault, they proceeded by the valley of the Loire, and arrived the same evening before Jergeau, which they proposed to reduce first, it being the town most oppressive to the surrounding country that the English held.

To Jergeau, from before Orleans, had retired the Earl of Suffolk with his two brothers John and Alexander de la Pole, and between seven and eight hundred fighting men. The place was strong, and well provided with artillery. There had already been one attempt made on it by Dunois, Saintrailles, and De Boussac with a force hastily collected

at Tours, Bourges, Angers, and Blois; but, after a severe skirmish under the walls, they had been obliged to retreat. They suffered no considerable loss, but Sir Henry Bissett, the governor of the town for the King of England, was killed: for whom there was great mourning in the garrison.

With Alençon and the Maid there were now about twelve hundred lances, besides foot-soldiers and commons in crowds, who had followed Jeanne from Orleans, expecting to do doughty deeds, and to be invincible under her Standard. An auxiliary army of English was known to be hovering in the Beauce, and Suffolk was believed to be in such strong force in Jergeau, that there was loud contention amongst the French leaders on the march as to whether the place could be safely assaulted or not. The Maid, seeing that a quarrel was likely to arise amongst them, interposed, bidding them have no fear though the English were ever so many, or ever so strong, but to go to the assault with vigour and good heart; for God guided her labours. She added, that if she were not assured of His guidance, she would rather keep sheep than encounter such dangers as she risked.

On their arrival before the town, the commons went valorously by themselves to the attack of the suburbs, proposing to gain a lodging for the night, and to their extreme astonishment were well beaten back. Jeanne perceived how they were

discouraged, and taking her Standard, she led them on again, and some men-at-arms with them, and this time they did so well that the army was actually housed for the night in the environs of Jergeau.

Its position there was sufficiently perilous if the English had taken advantage of it, but they did nothing. The Maid summoned Suffolk and the garrison in her usual style: "Surrender the town to the King of Heaven and King Charles, and go your way, or evil will befall you." Suffolk desired to treat. He asked for a truce of fifteen days. This the captains would not grant, but they proposed to let him and his march out with arms and horses, if they would march at once. Here, however, the Maid raised her voice, saying: "They shall save their lives only, and begone in their smocks, or I will have them by assault." Suffolk despised and refused her terms, and the bombards, cannon, and culverins were brought up under cover of night, and placed in position against the ramparts.

The firing opened at dawn, and all that day and the next night passed in attacks, sallies, and repulses. The walls were then much battered, and about nine o'clock on Monday morning, the trumpets sounded, and the heralds cried, "To the assault!"

Foremost came the Maid, sweeping gaily down

towards the fossé, with her Standard displayed, and calling to the Duke of Alençon, "Forward, gentle duke, to the assault!" Alençon had not given the command, and considering it premature, he told her so. Jeanne answered him undaunted: "Never doubt! The hour is when it pleases God. We must work when He wills. Work now, and He will work with us."

Alençon still demurred and hung back, on which she said, laughing and mocking him: "Ah, gentle duke, art thou afraid? Dost thou not know that I have promised thy wife to send thee back to her safe and sound?"

He advanced with her then, and the assault began. The defence was courageous and steady for nearly four hours; the attack was as fierce and persistent. Master Jean, the cannonier of Orléans, again did his duty ably, and picked off with his recovered culverin a tall Englishman whom Alençon pointed out to him as a very galling annoyance to the assailants. The Maid had a far and clear sight, and once she warned the duke out of danger, telling him that if he did not change his position, there was a piece on the walls would do him a damage. He moved aside, and the next moment a gentleman of Anjou, stepping into his place, was killed.

At the time and the point where the assault was hottest, and the resistance most desperate, the

Maid descended into the fossé, bearing her Standard and encouraging her men by word and act. She had set her foot on a ladder to scale the rampart herself when an English soldier cast down upon her from above a large stone which struck her Standard, and rebounding on her steel cap, flung her to the ground. The stone itself was dashed to fragments, but in an instant, Jeanne rose again, crying: "Friends, friends, cheer up! cheer up! Our Lord has condemned the English. This day they are ours. Be of good heart! come on! come on!"

The men, roused to fresh enthusiasm by her invincible spirit, rushed forward impetuously. Suffolk, from the ramparts, shouted out for speech with the Duke of Alençon. He was not heeded. The assault was furiously pressed, and the English, unable any longer to defend the walls, endeavoured to escape over the bridge into the castle. But the French followed hard after them. One Guillaume Regnault laid his hand on the Earl of Suffolk, summoning him to yield himself prisoner. Suffolk asked his captor if he were a gentleman, and when Regnault had satisfied him of that, he asked if he were a knight. Regnault said he had not yet attained that honour. "Then I make you one," replied the earl; and before giving up his sword to the young soldier, he dubbed him one of the brotherhood of chivalry. With Suffolk was taken

his brother John. His brother Alexander was slain, and in the pursuit of the fugitives through the streets of the town, there perished more than five hundred men.

Jergeau was abandoned to pillage for the easy submission it had made to the English, and in the evening Jeanne d'Arc, Alençon, Dunois, and others, returned triumphantly to Orleans, leaving troops behind to garrison the place for King Charles. The prisoners, amongst whom were many gentlemen not less highly renowned in arms than Suffolk and his brother, were conveyed to the city in a boat by the Loire for greater security. The rage of the French soldiers since they had begun to prevail over their ancient enemies, was so vindictive, that there was a fear lest they might put to the sword even those who had surrendered, and who were worth heavy ranson.

News of the taking of Jergeau was at once despatched to the king. The capture of the Earl of Suffolk was much made of, and some one sent him a letter containing a paraphrase of the prophecy of Merlin, concerning the Maid who was to come out of an oak wood to ride over the backs of the archers—a prophecy which seemed peculiarly applicable to Jeanne and the English, whose superiority in war had been long attributed to their expert archers. The earl was ransomed after a detention of fifteen days in Orleans; but during

that interval the power of the English on the Loire was broken, and the glorious *prestige* that had attended their arms for generations vanished.

The Maid rested two nights in Orleans, while fresh reinforcements came in for the king, which raised the army at her command to nearly eight thousand men. The capture of Jergeau was considered a feat of arms as grand as anything she had done for Orleans, and all the world was willing to go out with her to conquer.

On the Tuesday evening she called for the Duke of Alençon, and said to him, "To-morrow, after dinner, I will go and see Meun. Let the people be ready to march at that hour."

At Meun there was a considerable garrison under Lord Scales, and a son of the Earl of Warwick, governor of the young king of England. The Maid and Alençon carried from Orleans a splendid force; and when they came before Meun, there was a sharp skirmish, in which the French won the bridge over the Loire. Here for that night they rested, and the next morning, leaving a party to maintain it, they marched off to Beaugency, where Mathew Gough was governor, having under him another large garrison of the men who had been compelled to retire from before Orleans. The English who were in the town, at the advance of the Maid, immediately abandoned it, and shut themselves up

in the castle, a strong old fortress, the great tower of which remained since the days of the Roman dominion. The French then took possession of the town, and put their artillery in position to besiege the castle.

The next day Alençon heard that the Constable de Richemont was marching from Blois with a force of twelve hundred men and several famous knights to join the royal army. The constable was, however, in deep disgrace with the king for the part he had taken in removing from the court several of his favourites, and especially Tanneguy de Châtel, and Charles, advised by Georges de la Trémouille, had forbidden Alençon to receive him into his company, though he should bring him ever so good an aid. Alençon, as the king's lieutenant, felt obliged to obedience, and he told the Maid that if the constable appeared at Beaugency, he must go away. But before his arrival there came news that the English army was at Yenville in great force, with Sir John Talbot and Sir John Falstaff in command; and Jeanne, saying they must help themselves, asked Alençon if he would really go away when the French would need all the strength they could muster.

Charles had committed to the Maid the power of pardoning offences perpetrated against him and his kingdom, and when the constable, eager to divide with her the honours of victory, presented

himself at Beaugency on the Friday evening, she received him on her own responsibility. He was both distinguished and popular as a commander. La Hire and many other leaders were anxious that he should be permitted to join them, and urged the Maid to take him to grace. She did not scrutinise his conduct in withholding his support from the king, as his brother the Duke of Brittany had done, until the tide of fortune had turned in Charles's favour, but consented to receive his present help on condition that he would swear to serve his lawful sovereign henceforward all his life loyally. Richemont agreed, and made his liege oath to her for the king in the presence of the other princes, lords, and captains.

The same evening the English in the castle, perceiving that their position was incapable of defence against the Maid with her increased force, asked for a treaty. A council was held, and about midnight terms of capitulation were agreed upon, by which, in the morning at sunrise, the garrison marched out with horses and harness, and each man a mark's worth of goods, leaving everything else behind them. They were to move off into their own parts, and not to arm again for ten days.

Just as they were filing out of the castle, and over the bridge to depart, arrived a soldier of La Hire's band to announce that Talbot and Falstaff were coming up from Meun to the relief of Beaugency,

and that the vanguard of their army alone amounted to a thousand men.

Jeanne, who was otherwise engaged when the man told his tale, roused by the stir it excited, asked what was the news. When she was informed, she said to the Constable de Richemont, who was present, "Ah, constable, you are not here by my sending for; but since you are come, you will be of good service."

Some of the other French commanders heard the intelligence of the approach of Talbot and Falstaff with anything rather than glee. Visions of Agincourt, Cravant, Verneuil, Rouvray, rose warningly before their memories. They began to talk of getting to horse and retreating. But the Maid would have no retreat.

"By my Martin, we must fight them!" cried she, exulting in the hope of a pitched battle with her enemies. "If they were hung up to the clouds we would have them! God is sending them to us that we may chastise them. The king shall have to-day the best victory he has had yet. My *counsel* tells me they are all ours!"

The trumpets sounded the assembly, and the Maid, Alençon, Richemont, and all their force, with skirmishers in the van to look out for the foe, started off at speed in the direction of Meun. They encountered no English by the way, but when they came within view of the town they

found a troop of them endeavouring to recover the bridge taken the Wednesday previous. As the French advanced, they drew into the fields to join their main body, Lord Scales led out the garrison of Meun, and they formed in order as if intending to await the enemy there. On second thoughts, however, they declined to stand a battle in that position, and set off at a quick march across the Beauce towards Yenville. The Maid and all her company followed hard after them, the skirmishers flying out before to hinder them getting into any strong place. Near the village of Patay they drew up at last, a very fine army, about equal in number to the French, and Alençon said to the Maid, "Jeanne, there are the English in order of battle; shall we fight?"

Jeanne, who had been diligently observing the disposition of the enemy's host for some time, surprised him by inquiring, while Dunois, Richemont, and others stood by: "Have you all good spurs?"

"What!" cried Alençon, "shall we have to turn the back, and flee?"

Jeanne answered him: "Nay, nay, but they will flee, and be discomfited, and will never stop. And you must have your spurs to chase them." So confident were they that what she anticipated would come to pass, that captains were immediately chosen to lead the pursuit—La Hire, Saintrailles, and Ambrose de Loré. Jeanne was very anxious

to be of the vanguard herself, but this Alençon and D'Aulon would not allow.

The battle of Patay, which consummated the destruction of the splendid army the Earl of Salisbury had brought over to complete the conquest of France, was not so much a battle as a route, a desperate flight—or rather a rush for flight; which La Hire and the skirmishers circumvented: sweeping round and round the fugitives, checking, turning, and driving them, and keeping the great conflict always within reach of the Maid. They were about seven thousand, English and false French together, and when their dead were numbered by the heralds, they were two thousand five hundred and over. A few—that famous hero and knight of the garter, Sir John Falstaff, leading them—broke through, and rode a mad race to get into Yenville. But the people of Yenville shut their gates in their faces, and they fled on and on as if the devil were behind them, and out of sight, and were never caught: Falstaff spurring until he was safe within the walls of Corbeil. He forfeited his order of the garter for his cowardice; but there were hundreds of Englishmen as good as he, who would not and could not face the marvellous Witch-Maid, though they might have given account of many a glorious victory won over enemies of common flesh and blood, out-numbering them by thousands.

The French army encamped that night in the

neighbourhood of Patay, and the Maid, Alençon, and Richemont were lodged in the village. They were together when Sir John Talbot, the prisoner of Saintrailles, was brought into Alençon's presence. The duke said to him, "Well, Sir John Talbot, you did not expect this morning that it would befall you thus?"

"It is the fortune of war," replied Talbot. He shared it with Lord Scales, Lord Hungerford, Earl Warwick's son, Sir Thomas Ramsden, and a crowd of knights and gentlemen, besides nearly a thousand of his soldiers.

It was not in Jeanne d'Arc to triumph in any man's calamity; but there she stood, the Maid who had brought such deep humiliation on the English arms; one of the three great captains she had summoned before Orleans, dead: the other two, captive in her hands. She had wrested victory from the enemies of France, and had, indeed, given them that day, such a driving, with such a hunting-cry, as she had promised. But the hour of her battle-fury past, all the woman in her awoke. As she was riding into Patay, she saw a French soldier leading some prisoners, of whom one was wounded to death. His captor struck him, and he fell. Immediately the Maid dismounted, and kneeling by him, raised him in her arms, and held his head, and caused him to be confessed by a priest, weeping for him, and comforting him her best until he died.

Surely her pitying face must have worn to his glazing eyes the look of an angel! Her chaplain says, she always wept bitterly for the slain in battle, and prayed for them.

Clement de Fauquemberque thus registers for the Parliament of Paris the close of the Maid's campaign on the Loire:—

"This day [xviii. of June] Sir John Falstaff, Lord Scales, Sir Thomas Ramsden, and other English captains, archers, and men-at-arms, who were assembled to convey supplies and give succour to Sir John Talbot, and other English captains and men-at-arms, then in guard and garrison in the towns and fortresses of Meun and Beaugency on the Loire, were met in the fields between Yenville and Beaugency, and were routed and defeated by the enemy, being in equal numbers. In their company was the Maid, who had been with them at the raising of the siege before Orleans, and at the recovery of Jergeau; who, at the above encounter, took prisoners, amongst others, Talbot, Ramsden, and Scales, as it is reported. And Falstaff retreated, and returned to the Duke of Bedford, being then at Corbeil."

IX.

THE PROGRESS TO RHEIMS.

ON Sunday, June 19, the day after the battle of Patay, the Maid, the Duke of Alençon, and all their company, dined in the village, and, in the afternoon rode back to Orleans. The Constable de Richemont did not venture to approach the court without leave of the king, and he returned to Beaugency, commissioning the Maid to make his peace with Charles for him. Orleans gave her and the victorious army a joyous reception, and thanks to God were returned in all the churches for the success that had attended her arms during the past week. Jeanne remained in Orleans until the following Friday, receiving and reviewing the troops who were to march to Rheims, and then passing them forward to Gien, which had been appointed as the general *rendezvous*. The king was at Sully, and there he welcomed the Maid and

the captains who had shared her glorious eight days' campaign; there also he let her and them understand that he was still halting between two opinions, as to whether he should go to Rheims yet or not. Georges de la Trémouille, Raoul de Gaucourt, and the Archbishop of Rheims, were strongly opposed to the expedition.

Jeanne did not pause in her preparations for this. She was resolved that to Rheims Charles should go, and every day and all day long she thought and toiled for him, while he dreamed the hours away in idle pleasure. One morning she persuaded him to meet her at Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire, to see some troops march through on their road to Gien, and there, at last, he was touched by the spectacle of her devotion. She was so overtasked and weary, that she could not restrain her tears in speaking to him. Very sharp thorns were springing for her crown already. Charles had no magnanimity, no warmth of character. It seemed that he entertained more doubts of her now than before she had done him any service. She could not but feel it, and he took the worst way to comfort her. He said many kind things to her, paid her many fine compliments, and enjoined on her the necessity of taking some rest. Jeanne replied that she could not rest. It was his apathy wearied her more than her work. She entreated him not to doubt but that he should recover all his

kingdom, and shortly be crowned. Then she pleaded for the Constable de Richemont, representing his present good-will, and the power of gentlemen and men-at-arms he had at his command, and craved Charles's pardon for his past offences. The king, at her request, promised to forgive Richemont; but, advised by Georges de la Trémouille, who mortally feared his former patron, he declined to let him join the army which was to escort him to Rheims—if he went. This again deeply grieved and disappointed Jeanne, who strove with all her heart to heal the quarrels of the princes of France, that they might be one, united and strong against the English. She had even addressed a letter to the Duke of Burgundy, beseeching him to make peace with the king, and to return to his lawful allegiance.

From Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire Charles and the Maid went to Château-neuf, and there was held a great council to reconsider the expedience of tempting the dangers that were sure to beset a journey to Rheims. After the day of Patay, the English garrisons in Montpipeau, Bonny, and some other small places, either fired them and fled, or else surrendered at the first summons; but there still remained La Charité, Cosne, and a few fortified towns in the parts of Berry, where they and the Burgundians maintained themselves. Some of the council proposed that these should be cleared

before the perilous march northwards was undertaken; and Georges de la Trémouille suggested that the Maid should be sent with an army to conquer Normandy instead of going to Rheims. But Jeanne's voice was against every project that delayed her darling enterprise of crowning the king, and she positively refused to stir a foot towards Normandy until that should have been accomplished. The council ended by consenting to her wishes—all perhaps more or less reluctantly.

The people of Orleans were very desirous that the king should pass through their city on his way to Rheims; and when his progress was finally arranged, they hung their houses with tapestry of garlands to the roofs, and made all gay and splendid for his reception. But Charles evaded their loyal wishes, and proceeded to Gien from Sully, where nobles, knights, and men-at-arms were already assembled in great numbers. Thither on Friday, the 24th of June, the Maid and Alençon followed with their company, and were received with the utmost delight.

Gien and its neighbourhood were thronged with people of all conditions, wild to follow the Standard of the Maid. They could talk of nothing but Meun, Beaugency, and Yenville, reduced to the king's obedience, and the victory at Patay won in a single day by her prowess and the prowess of the soldiers she inspired. Charles announced that he

could give only three francs a man to those who meant to march with him to Rheims, but they declared that rather than stay behind, they would go at their own charges; for they were sure that, by means of the Maid, great good was coming to the kingdom of France. Multitudes of gentlemen, who had not wealth enough to mount and arm themselves suitably to their rank, prepared to go as archers and skirmishers, on foot, or riding little nags and roadsters.

The general enthusiasm was not shared by Charles's favourites, nor by Charles himself. The people regarded the coronation as the one thing needful to confirm him king of France. Jeanne d'Arc anticipated that it would give him an irrevocable advantage over his rival; but even now, if he could have found a plausible excuse, Charles would have turned his back on Rheims, and would have retreated to his pleasant castles in Berry and Touraine. He began to deliberate, and consider, and hesitate once more. His nature recoiled from sudden changes and violent dangers. Jeanne promised him a peaceful progress, but others warned him of strong cities all the way, garnished and garrisoned by English and Burgundian troops, and of walled towns full of false French who held to their party. Five days lapsed in new debates; and while they were being held, the queen arrived from Bourges, hoping to accompany Charles to

Rheims, and to be crowned with him. To this, however, the king would not consent, and she returned to Bourges as she came, much to her disappointment. Perhaps he feared for her the perils and inconveniences of the road, and he had certainly not the means of conveying her in accordance with her rank.

Charles's poverty at this crisis of his fortunes furnished the courtiers with a jest such as they were never above enjoying. It was related that a shoemaker of Bourges had made him a pair of new spatterdashes for his journey, and that he had put one on when the man asked to be paid. Charles could not pay, and the churlish Crispin forthwith pulled it off, and the king was obliged to resume his old spatterdashes. He ordered them to be greased first to improve their appearance, and the queen was represented as rallying him on his dandyism. Later, at a time when he was better able to laugh at such mishaps than now, the mythical story, which closely symbolised the truth, found its way with other accidents of Charles's adversity into a popular satirical poem :—

> " Quant le roi s'en vint en France,
> Il fit oindre ses houssiaulx,
> Et la reine lui demande :
> 'Où vont aller cest damoiseaulx ?"

While Charles loitered, and the courtiers jested, and the council consulted, Jeanne d'Arc devoured

her impatience as best she could. Vexations great and small beset her in the midst of her popular triumph. Her second brother Jean had lately arrived in the camp to share her great fortunes. He was an insignificant young man, much less estimable than her favourite Pierre, but Jeanne loved him as she loved everything that belonged to her home, and to Domremy. She inquired all about her village and her people, and in reply she received one unexpected wound, the depth of which she did not probe until later, though she felt its sting cruelly.

"They say in our parts that you began your fate under the Beautiful May," her brother told her.

Jeanne indignantly denied the imputation. What! did they believe in Lorraine, as the English believed, that all her work for love of king and country, given her by God to do, was witchcraft? There was no evil art in her vocation, she assured him. But what pain to have such an assurance to make to one of her own kindred, and to hear that the fatal doubt of her sincerity was the common talk of Domremy! It augured ill for her future, but happily her mission possessed her mind too thoroughly to let her dwell long on any private sorrow.

From Gien, she despatched a letter to the inhabitants of Tournay, a town isolated in the midst of the territories of the Duke of Burgundy, which had

nevertheless acknowledged Charles, and had stood to him faithfully through his misfortunes. The letter shows with what tenacity she adhered to her resolve of carrying the king to Rheims, and what a certainty she felt of accomplishing it successfully in spite of his forebodings.

✠ JHESUS ✠ MARIA.

"Gentle, loyal French of the town of Tournay, the Maid sends you news from hence that in eight days she has driven the English out of all the places they held on the Loire, by assault or otherwise; where there have been great numbers slain or taken. The Earl of Suffolk, his brother John de la Pole, Sir John Talbot, Lord Scales, and many knights and captains, have been taken, and a brother of the Earl of Suffolk and Glasdale are dead. Hold you firm, loyal French, I pray you, and be ready to come to the coronation of the gentle King Charles at Rheims, where we shall shortly be; and come to meet us when you shall know that we are approaching. God have you in His keeping, and give you grace to maintain the good quarrel of the kingdom of France. Written at Gien the xxv. day of June.

"To the loyal French of the town of Tournay."

Two days after the despatch of this letter, the Maid quitted her lodgings in Gien, and to shame Charles out of his inertness and vacillation, went

and camped in the fields with her people in full view of his apartments. She stayed there two nights, and then, without waiting for him any longer, set forward towards Montargis alone. The next morning he made up his mind, and followed her.

Once on its road, the royal train marched with the army direct for Rheims, and on the 1st of July came in sight of Auxerre, a city of Burgundy. Auxerre closed its gâtes, but sent out a deputation of citizens to negotiate a truce until they could receive orders from their duke: promising to yield afterwards if Troyes, Chalons, and Rheims did so. Georges de la Trémouille advised the king to accept their terms, and two thousand crowns were paid to him by the city for its present ransom. The leaders of the army were much opposed to this truce; and the Maid, who loved either full peace or open war, would fain have assaulted the place. But she was overruled by the favourite. The people of Auxerre supplied the army with food, of which it had already begun to stand in need; and after resting three days in the environs, the host marched forward to Saint-Florentin, which surrendered as soon as summoned. The peasants welcomed it on its way, but the towns and cities were more cautious.

Passing by Brinon-l'Archevèque and Saint-Phal, the king, on the 5th of July, drew near to Troyes.

The Maid had caused a review of the army to be held after leaving the neighbourhood of Auxerre, and it was then found to consist of nearly twelve thousand fighting men, besides a mob of volunteers and camp followers, who increased at every halt. Amongst the commanders were the Duke of Alençon, the Counts of Vendôme, Clermont, Dunois, and Boulogne, the Marshals de Boussac, de Retz, and de Graville, the Admiral du Culant, the Lords of Sully, Laval, Lohéac, Thouars, Chaumont, Chauvigny, and De Prie, and those excellent captains of Free-Lances, La Hire, Saintrailles, Florent d'Illiers, and Ambrose de Loré. Besides these there was a crowd of simple gentlemen, each with a few retainers, all brave and hardy, and trusting in the marvellous Maid who had delivered Orleans, all confident of the success of their present enterprise. The Constable de Richemont had ventured to present himself with his stout Bretons at Auxerre, and knowing that it was La Trémouille who stood between him and the king, he sent the favourite a too humble message of entreaty that he would suffer his services to be accepted by Charles. But La Trémouille knew that his private interests would never accord with the powerful constable's; and the answer returned to him was, that he must retire, for the king would rather never be crowned at all than be crowned in his presence. Richemont, therefore, went his way,

much to the regret of Charles's true well-wishers. Bernard Armagnac, who had come with him, was also dismissed, La Trémouille being not less jealous of his influence than of that of his own original patron.

From Saint Phal letters of summons had been despatched by the king and the Maid to the people of Troyes, who, on the consummation of the ignominious treaty by which Charles had been disinherited, had sworn allegiance to the English king. The city was strong and well-fortified, and had a garrison of seven hundred English, besides Burgundians as many. The governor, therefore, resolved to stand a siege rather than yield, and sent out messengers to Châlons and Rheims to ask for succours. When the royal army appeared before his gates, he received it with a sally, and though beaten back to his walls with loss, he carried off several prisoners, and was not discouraged. The knowledge that Troyes deserved hard-measure from Charles strengthened the hearts and arms of all in it for an obstinate defence.

The French host encamped round the city, and for five days lay in the fields without adequate means of pushing a siege, and even without means of supporting life. When they sat down before the walls of Troyes, five or six thousand of the soldiers had eaten no bread for a week, but had subsisted entirely on field-produce — chiefly beans

which had been sown in obedience to the commands of the famous preaching friar, Brother Richard. Without them, hundreds must have perished of hunger, and the man to whose foresight they were indebted was now in the city they were helplessly investing.

Perhaps never before had an army set out on a long adventure trusting so entirely to the chapter of providential accidents as did this army, led by Jeanne d'Arc, which was escorting Charles VII. to Rheims. She herself was eminently practical. She professed to do no miracles, but her followers depended on her as if she had but to speak and their mouths would be filled, but to appear and their enemies would vanish. Betwixt the multitude who would ascribe to her supernatural powers, and the high in office who would doubt and thwart her at every step, her way was difficult enough. But she held straight on, bravely, steadfastly. She felt in her own soul what a mighty lever is human passion exalted to its highest, and with that she wrought. Love of France was her inspiration, and her men had kindled at it; intrepid courage was her witchery, and they had caught it; trust in God was her strength, and she made them share it. With her, in the fervour of their enthusiasm, they were ready to endure and suffer whatever came, in the certain hope of a good end. Behind them was Auxerre, before them was Troyes, beyond them

were Châlons and Rheims, all strong cities in the hands of the enemy; famine was in the camp, and doubt was in the council, but the soldiers looked at Jeanne d'Arc, and they never despaired.

The position of the royal army, however, appeared each day more serious to those who were responsible for it. Nothing happened save now and then a sally or a skirmish, and the city showed no signs of making its submission. Charles felt profoundly discouraged, and he summoned Alençon, De Gaucourt, Vendôme, and all the chief captains to advise him what to do. His ministers had already given their opinion in private, and the Archbishop of Rheims stood forward to expound it to the military commanders. He never possessed much patience of hope—witness his prompt retreat from Orleans when its peril seemed near—and though he always yielded to the influence of the Maid when she was present, in her absence he escaped from it, and opposed her active policy with all his powers of argument and persuasion. She was absent now, and he was able to speak his mind with perfect freedom.

He said that the army could not continue before Troyes for many reasons: first, because it was starving, no relief came in from any part, and nobody had money to buy if it were brought; then, because it would be a marvellous thing to take the city without artillery, strong as it was, and well-

garrisoned and provisioned; and a yet more marvellous thing to bring it peaceably into the king's obedience when it took no notice of his summons. Besides these difficulties, he recited many more which might possibly overtake the host, and concluded by reminding the captains that there was not any French city or fortress nearer than Gien to which they could look for succour, and that was thirty leagues away. He then exhorted them to give each one his best advice to the king; and the greater number gave it, that considering all the archbishop alleged was true, the army had better relinquish its project of marching to Rheims, and with all convenient speed retrace its steps beyond the Loire.

Thereupon spoke up Robert le Maçon, one of the three witnesses who, at the castle of Loches, had heard Jeanne d'Arc tell the king how her *counsel* addressed her, and bade her always go on, and God would aid her. He said she ought to be sent for, and her advice heard. When the king undertook this journey, he did not undertake it relying on his power of men-at-arms, or on his treasury which was empty, or at all because it seemed a thing easy or even possible to be done, but only because the Maid had urged him to it, declaring that it was God's will, and that he would meet with but little resistance.

Jeanne was accordingly sent for. On entering

the crowded council, she made her usual reverence to Charles, and then gave ear to the archbishop, who briefly reminded her how, by her persuasion, the king had been moved to undertake this expedition to Rheims; he then, at greater length, set forth the causes why it seemed now advisable to him, and the majority of the council and captains, that it should be abandoned.

She heard him to the end, and then turning to Charles, asked whether he would believe her if she spoke. He replied that if she gave any reasonable opinion, he would willingly believe her. Then said she: "Gentle Dauphin, if you will stay two days longer before Troyes, by force or by love it shall be yours."

"We would stay six, Jeanne, if we could be certain of having it then," replied the archbishop.

"Never fear, you shall have it to-morrow!" rejoined she. On that assurance the king and his timid advisers consented to remain where they were.

Jeanne went out quickly, mounted her horse, and with her Martin-bâton in her hand, rode about the camp, setting all the world to work — knights, squires, men of every condition; some to make fascines to fill the moat, others to bring doors, shutters, tables, whatever they could pillage in the neighbourhood, to help to bridge it; others to mount the few light cannon, culverins, and bombards the army had brought. She toiled all the

night herself; and Dunois, who was diligent and active too, said she was worth any three captains in directing and encouraging the men.

Those dark hours were very terrible hours within the city. The hearts of the people began to fail them for fear. They flocked to the churches, praying like men who see judgment drawing nigh. Brother Richard went about counselling and comforting them. The English authorities had driven him out of Paris on suspicion that he leant to Charles and his party, and at this critical moment the eloquent preacher was found in the city where his advocacy was most valuable for Charles's cause.

The governor, the bishop, the clergy, the English, the false French, the chief citizens watched from the walls the menacing preparations of the royal army, and of the victorious Maid who led it. They reconsidered their decision not to make peace with the king by the light of the news they had heard from Orleans and Jargeau, from Beaugency and Patay, and decided that it was not expedient to wait for her assault. The inhabitants sent out Brother Richard, with a vessel of holy water, to inquire if she were indeed come on the part of God. The preacher approached her with solemnity and caution, signing himself with the cross, sprinkling the ground, and tossing the exorcising shower towards her, that if she were, as they said in Paris, a spirit of evil, her evil might not fall on him. Jeanne

laughed, and hastened his advance by calling out: "Come on boldly, I shall not fly away;" and then he drew near, and a brief conversation brought them to a good understanding.

The report Brother Richard carried back into Troyes determined the inhabitants to surrender. The bishop and clergy, the captains of the garrison, the magistrates and leading citizens went out trembling and quaking to the king. But they had nothing to fear. So long as Jeanne d'Arc had a voice in Charles's councils there was no word of revenges, but only of full pardon and full peace for all the French who would accept them. The king received the suppliants graciously, and a treaty of capitulation was agreed upon, by which the English and Burgundian soldiers were to march out with their arms and goods, and the city was to receive a complete amnesty for all that was past. The bishop and clergy were also confirmed in the benefices to which they had been collated by the English sovereign, in recognition of the ready service they had offered to their rightful prince.

As soon as this composition was arranged, the army was amply furnished with food by the people of Troyes; and the Maid, zealous for Charles's honour and safety, rode into the city with a body of archers, and stationed them all the length of the streets through which he would have to pass, from the gate to the cathedral, in making his trium-

phal entrance, and in going to hear the grand mass which was to celebrate the event. The garrison began then to move off, carrying with them the French prisoners they had taken during the skirmishes before the town. The prisoners felt this very hard, but their captors declared that, by the terms of the treaty, they had a right to keep them. Word of these proceedings was, however, brought to Jeanne, and she instantly galloped off to the gate and stopped them, protesting by her bâton that the English and Burgundians should have no man of hers while she was there to hinder it. The king ordered a little money to be given them, by way of ransom for their prizes; but they were exceedingly discontented with the exchange, and went their way humiliated and irate, and with hearts full of animosity to the Maid, who had beaten them at all points.

Ambrose de Loré was left in command of the army outside the walls, and about ten o'clock in the morning, on the 11th of July, Charles VII. rode into Troyes with the Maid, the princes, lords, and captains, all gaily attired and handsomely mounted. They made a very fine show, and the populace gave them a joyous welcome. Brother Richard preached one of his famous sermons on the occasion, and henceforward attached himself openly to Charles's cause, following Jeanne d'Arc nearly to the end of her martial career.

After hearing mass in the cathedral, the king received the oaths of the clergy and citizens, and the Maid, who was even more regarded than himself, was requested to turn aside a little while from her glory, and hold an infant at the baptismal font. This womanly service was often asked of her afterwards, and always granted with joy. Perhaps when Jeanne cradled the soft atoms in her strong young arms, on her pure young heart, she had a delusive dream of those three wonderful sons she proposed to have herself when her ministry for France was accomplished. She had much love for children, and they much love for her.

The next day Charles quitted Troyes, and leaving a governor and garrison to maintain it for him, continued his progress with all his train towards Châlons-sur-Marne.

The Archbishop of Rheims had not been in his cathedral-city, nor had he taken any part in its affairs, since it fell into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy; but immediately on the submission of Troyes, he wrote to the inhabitants, admonishing them of the king's coming, and bidding them prepare to receive him for his coronation. Charles also sent forward his herald, *Montjoy*, with letters of summons to the same effect; and the news of the unexpected defection of Troyes, threw the Burgundian party into the utmost consternation. L'Isle-Adam and Saint-Saveuse, two of the duke's

most trustworthy partisans, were despatched from Paris with troops to strengthen the garrison, and an assurance that, if the city would only hold out against the Armagnacs for six weeks, an army of seven thousand English, lately landed in Normandy, would come to its relief. The inhabitants, however, did not like the prospect of such distant succour against the Maid who had raised the siege of Orleans in ten days, and swept the English from the Loire in eight. They refused to have their garrison increased, and betrayed an evident intention of returning to their lawful allegiance. The people of Troyes sent them word, as they did also to the inhabitants of Châlons, that they might receive Charles with all confidence; for that he had pardoned their past disloyalty without reserve, and had taken them to his grace most benignly.

All the way now as the king went, the towns and fortresses yielded to him, and again the time-serving courtiers loudly extolled the Maid who conducted the triumphant progress. She rode constantly with the army in full harness; sometimes in the van, sometimes in the rear, and sometimes in company with the king. Her lightest wish was law. Evil things which offended her sight, were bidden to avoid it. Men curbed their rude and blasphemous tongues wherever she passed. Each evening her chaplain found out the nearest church, and thither she went, and had the bells

rung through the long summer twilight. The melody lifted her soul above the turmoil of her glory, and brought to her rapt senses the sweet counsel she was wont to hear in the chimes of Domremy. Afterwards the friars who followed the camp sang an antiphony to the blessed Virgin. Jeanne liked the soldiers to come to the service, and many, to gratify her, did. If she had no more heart's ease, she had love, honour, praise, renown.

To each gate of the enemy she sent a herald under her Standard to cry: "Surrender to the King of Heaven and King Charles!" and those within immediately obeyed, and acknowledged their rightful sovereign. Without any further trouble than receiving the keys of each place, and the oaths of those who kept them, the king marched straight on to Châlons, and arrived before the city on the 15th of July. The bishop, the clergy, and chief inhabitants came out half a day's journey to meet him, and he had only to promise peace, to enter, and accept the joyful welcome of the people. Some loyal scribe amongst them wrote off straightway a letter to the citizens of Rheims, counselling them to give him a like honourable reception. He was, said the despatch, so mild, gracious, compassionate, and merciful; so handsome, of such a noble presence, and fine understanding, that not for the world would they in Châlons

have done otherwise than acknowledge him who, since the death of his father, was the true and undoubted heir of France. Jeanne d'Arc had not counted without reason on the national sentiment of the people, which in her had attained the force of a passion. They had enjoyed, in these parts, a term of order and prosperity under the English government, but at heart they were French subjects still; and it appeared that Charles had but to claim their faith, to show that he could protect them, and they were his.

The royal train rested one night in Châlons, and there four peasants from Domremy sought out the Maid for old friendship's sake, and were warmly received by her. Amongst them was her godfather, Jean Morel, to whom she presented some garment of a red colour which she was wearing. Another of the four was Gerard d'Epinal, whose child was her godson. They all talked of the wonderful rumours that had flown to Lorraine about her, and Gerard d'Epinal asked if she never felt afraid of the dangers she risked in war.

Jeanne gave him a significant answer: "I fear," said she, "nothing but treachery."

Already, then, in the hey-day and sunshine of her glory, she was conscious of a cold, creeping chill in the atmosphere of the court—conscious of treason in the air.

On the morrow early, Saturday, July 16th, the

king moved forward to Septsaulx, a castle only about four leagues from Rheims. The archbishop left him there, and proceeded to the city, whence he presently returned with the clergy and principal inhabitants, bringing their keys to Charles. An act of oblivion was granted them for the past; and the same day, towards evening, the king made his triumphal entry into the city, the Maid riding by him, and the princes, knights, and great lords following. All the inhabitants, and the peasantry from far and near, poured forth in crowds to welcome him, weeping and rejoicing and shouting *Noel!* with vociferous loyalty.

In the noisy throng were several more sightseers from the marches of Lorraine,—Durant Laxart, Husson Lemaistre, and Albert d'Ourches. And from Domremy had come Jeanne's father, the stern old man! Did he remember his dreams that had made him wish her dead when he beheld her in her triumph, the companion of a king, the wonder of princes, all the world hailing her as the heaven-sent saviour and deliverer of France? His son Pierre was in her train, who could tell him her toils from the beginning; her marvels achieved, her difficulties overcome, her sorrows suffered. And she was the same Jeanne as ever; the same in love to her own people; the same in her unresting necessity to obey her mysterious *voices*, and to go on working out her vocation and her destiny.

Tradition says, grief broke her father's heart for her at last. They two loved each other—were of the same strain; perhaps both even now, through the glory, dimly discerned the end.

Jacques d'Arc was lodged at an inn kept by a worthy widow opposite the cathedral. Its sign was L'Ane-rayé. The city of Rheims, for the Maid's sake, took her father under its care, and defrayed all his charges while he stayed near her; and when he left, presented him with a horse to ride home to now famous Domremy.

The coronation of Charles VII. was celebrated on the morrow after his arrival at Rheims, Sunday, July 17. Diligent preparations went on all through the night, and almost before dawn came into the city the Duke of Lorraine and Bar, and the young heir of Commercy, each with a train of gentlemen to grace the occasion.

Very early in the morning, according to ancient custom, four knights, the Marshal de Boussac, the Marshal de Retz, the Admiral du Culant, and the Sire de Graville, set forth on horseback, armed at all points, and carrying each his banner in his hand, to the Abbey of Saint-Rémy, to escort from thence the Saint-Ampoule, the vial of holy oil which tradition declared had been brought from heaven by a dove for the coronation of King Clovis, and which had been used ever since for the anoint-

ing of the sovereigns of France. They swore an oath to conduct it safely to and fro, and attended by a noble guard, presented themselves at the gate of Saint-Rémy. The abbot, wearing his pontifical robes and a rich vestment of gold, came out to greet them; and bearing the sacred vial very devoutly and solemnly, surrounded by the knights and their company, brought it into the great church of Notre-Dame at Rheims. At the entrance of the choir the knights dismounted, and the archbishop, invested with mitre and croizer, received the vial, and placed it on the high altar.

The ceremonial began at nine in the morning, and was not over till two of the afternoon. It was as formal and splendid as if a year's warning had been given beforehand, and more than three hundred knights and gentlemen were present at it. Near the altar, bearing her Standard, stood the Maid, "to whom, after God, were all thanks due for bringing King Charles's sacred coronation to pass." Brother Richard was close by her. When the company had taken their places, the king-at-arms appeared, and from before the high altar summoned the lay peers of France—the Dukes of Burgundy, Normandy, and Aquitaine, and the Counts of Flanders, Toulouse, and Champagne. They were all absent, but six representatives were chosen to fulfil their duties—the Duke of Alençon, the Counts of Clermont and Vendôme, and the Sires

De Laval, De Gaucourt, and La Trémouille. The functions of the spiritual peers were performed by the Archbishop of Rheims, the Bishops of Châlons, Orleans, and Séez, and two others whose names are not recorded. All the canons of the cathedral and clergy of the city and neighbouring country were assembled, and the great church was crowded in every part with the people.

The king was then led in, royally apparelled, the Sire d'Albert carrying the sword before him, and was conducted to his place in front of the altar. He knelt, and the archbishop caused him to take the oath which the kings of France were wont to take before receiving the holy unction—which oath was to keep and defend the Church, to do justice in mercy, to maintain peace with his Christian people, and to suppress all heretics, and put them out of his dominions. When this was done, two ecclesiastical peers raised the chair in which he had seated himself, to show him to the people, as if demanding their consent, while two others held the crown over his head. The trumpets sounded, and shouts of *Noel! Noel!* rang to the roof. While they still thundered and echoed, the Duke of Alençon, representing the Duke of Burgundy, knighted the king. The archbishop then proceeded with the service, giving him the holy unction, which makes the person of the sovereign sacred and inviolable, pronouncing the prayers, exhortations,

and benedictions belonging to the ceremonial, and finally setting the crown upon his head. Then all the trumpets sounded, and all the people shouted again, *Noel! Noel!* until it seemed as if the vaulted ceiling of the church must be rent with the storm of voices.

When it was finished, the Maid let Brother Richard take her Standard, and coming to the king, she knelt before him and embraced his knees, saying, "Gentle king, now is done the good pleasure of God, whose will it was that I should conduct you into this city of Rheims to receive your sacred coronation, showing that you are the true king, and he to whom the kingdom of France ought to belong." And then she kissed his feet, passionately weeping. Charles, and those who stood around him, were moved to pity for her, and some were even moved to tears. "It was a very beautiful thing to see the behaviour of the king and the Maid, and God knows how you were wished for there," writes, the same day, the gentleman charged to announce to the queen and her mother, Queen Yolande, that Jeanne's promise was accomplished, and Charles crowned.

The king made three knights in the church, and then went to dine in the palace of the archbishop. The prelate sate at table with him, and the Duke of Alençon and the Counts of Clermont and Vendôme served him, as the peers of France were wont

to serve the king on the high day of his coronation.

The Maid retired into a little chapel alone to pray and be still. But before the day was done, she was at work again on her divine mission of pacifying France—dictating a second letter to the Duke of Burgundy, very characteristic of her magnanimity, devotion, and patriotism, and also of her exalted hope and confidence in God for her king and country:—

✠ JHESUS ✠ MARIA.

High and mighty prince, Duke of Burgundy, Jeanne the Maid, in the name of the King of Heaven, her rightful and sovereign lord, requires that the King of France and you make a good, firm, and lasting peace. Forgive one another with a good heart, fully, as loyal Christians ought; and if you must fight, go against the Saracens.

Prince of Burgundy, I pray, beseech, and supplicate you as humbly as you can desire, that you will make war no more in the holy kingdom of France. Withdraw your people who are in any of its fortresses. I tell you in his name, the gentle King of France is ready to make peace, saving his honour, if it rest only with you. And I tell you, in the name of the King of Heaven, for your welfare and your honour, and on your life, that you shall gain no battle over the loyal French, and that

they who make war in the holy kingdom of France fight against King Jesus, King of Heaven and of all the earth, my rightful and sovereign Lord. I beg and pray you, with clasped hands, that you will make no longer war upon us, you, your soldiers or your subjects; for believe surely that how many men soever you lead against us, they shall gain nothing, and great pity will it be for the battle and the bloodshed.

It is three weeks since I wrote to you, and sent you good letters by a herald, bidding you to the coronation of the king, which has been done to-day, Sunday, xvij. day of this present month of July, in the city of Rheims, to which I have had no answer, nor any news yet of the herald.

To God I commend you; may He have you in His keeping if He please; and give us good peace.

To the Lord Duke of Burgundy. Written at Rheims, xvij. day of July, cccexxix.

The coronation of Charles VII. stands recorded on the registers of the Parliament of Paris thus:—

"This day [xix. of July], it was publicly reported in Paris for news, that my Lord Charles de Valois, Sunday last past, xvii. day of this month, had been crowned in the church of Rheims, in the manner that his father and the other kings of France have been crowned aforetime."

X.

THE CHECK BEFORE PARIS.

THE king, the Maid, and the court remained at Rheims until Thursday, July 21, and on that day went to dine, sup, and sleep at the Abbey of Saint-Marcoul, six leagues off, whither the sovereigns of France were accustomed to go after their coronation to perform the mystery of touching for the evil.

Jeanne d'Arc, with the same intrepid swiftness of action as had enabled her to deliver Orleans and to crown the king, while the English were standing amazed and perplexed by the suddenness and utterness of their discomfiture, desired to march straight on Paris to reduce the mistress-city of the kingdom before they had leisure to recover from their dismay. But here again she was thwarted. Though the younger and more enterprising of the military commanders were all of her advice, Charles

could not pluck up the spirit to back their heroic temerity any further. He was well pleased to have received his crown according to the ancient and solemn ritual, but he would have been thankful now to rest from his labours. An immediate advance on the capital was a greater hazard than he could be spurred to encounter; but an immediate return beyond the Loire would have been a scarcely smaller hazard to propose to the army, exhilarated with the prodigious success of its march to Rheims. The council, therefore, took a middle course, and decided that the places leading to Paris should be first reduced; and while pursuing this timid and over-prudent policy, the opportunity of a splendid and complete success was thrown away.

The Maid was forced to yield to the counsels that traversed hers, and as she might not do what she would, she did what she could. The impetus she had given to the national sentiment was too strong to fail soon. Her renown increased, and the enthusiasm for the king spread after he was crowned. Laon sent its keys to him at Saint Marcoul, and the next day, when he appeared with the army before Vailly, it immediately made submission. The day after that the city of Soissons opened its gates, and the clergy and inhabitants received the king with all the honour and affection they knew how to show, glad to escape the yoke of the Duke of Burgundy, who had almost de-

stroyed the place when he wrested it from its lawful allegiance.

At Soissons Charles reposed several days, and then made a retrograde march on Château-Thierry, whither had retired Guillaume de Châtillon, the governor of Rheims. The place was strong, and had a garrison of four hundred men, commanded by Jean de Croy, Jean de Brimeu, and several more famous captains of Burgundy; but the inhabitants of the town were inclined to return to the obedience of Charles, and as the garrison had no near hope of succour, it was agreed to surrender the castle to the king on conditions. The soldiers were permitted to march out with their arms and goods, and they took their way direct to Paris, where the Duke of Bedford was assembling a powerful force to take the field against Charles.

Henry Beaufort, the cardinal-bishop of Winchester, had just crossed the sea from England with five thousand men-at-arms and archers, whom he had levied at the prayer of Pope Martin V. for the succour of the armies of the Church against the Hussites in Bohemia. He arrived with them in Paris while Charles was at Soissons, and his nephew the regent begged him to abandon his crusade against the heretics, and give the men to him to make head against the Armagnacs, until the aids the Duke of Burgundy was mustering should arrive. The cardinal granted his request,

and retired himself to Rouen, thence to watch the progress of the extraordinary events which seemed to menace the English dominion in France with a total overthrow.

The royal army heard at Château-Thierry of all this power preparing to withstand the king, and were in some degree discouraged; but Jeanne assured them the English would not come, or if they came, would not fight. She kept them in motion as much as possible, and the prompt submission of Provins and Montmirail-en-Brie at her summons revived their flagging spirits. Some good captains, the Maid's best friends, were being gradually separated from the main army. The king had recompensed the services of the brave and faithful La Hire by appointing him governor of the Vermandois, and the gallant Poton de Saintrailles was now made governor of Château-Thierry. Jeanne felt the loss of her favourite companions-in-arms, as the discipline of the soldiers relaxed with success. While in the way of distributing rewards, Charles gave her one which showed his recognition of her personal disinterestedness—he made Domremy and Greux, her birthplace and her mother's, free for ever of tax and tribute to the state.

From Château-Thierry the king moved to Provins, where he heard that the Duke of Bedford was marching with a strong force by Mélun and Corbeil to give him battle. He immediately carried out

his army to meet him, and camped in the fields near the castle of Lamote-sur-Nangis. Here he and the Maid waited all day, rumours flying to and fro till night that the regent was coming—was coming. But he never came. He carried his host back into Paris—from ten to twelve thousand fighting men, the scouts reported that it was.

The famous English ruler was, indeed, standing for a lost cause, and he had begun to see it. He was a wise, brave, able, resolute man, but the task of governing France for an alien-prince, a child, when the nation had roused itself to put off his yoke, was beyond his strength. Burgundy was not to be trusted; Paris was restive under his hand; provincial city after city, and fortress after fortress was expelling his garrisons, and crying *Noel!* for King Charles — for Charles, their born-sovereign, heralded by a heaven-sent Maid, who showed as signs of her sending great victories snatched from the long-triumphant enemies of her country, and its disinherited prince brought safely through their midst, and crowned in the place where all his predecessors were crowned.

Succours of men and money arrived slowly and scantily from England, and the stream was yet to diminish. There was presently a proclamation circulating in Kent against the captains and soldiers who refused to pass the sea for fear of the Maid; and a proclamation in the parts of France subject

to England, against those who deserted for fear of her. The belief that she was a witch had now taken permanent hold of her beaten and superstitious adversaries. Thus the Duke of Bedford wrote about this time to his nephew Henry VI. :—

"All things prospered with you till the time of the siege of Orleans, taken in hand God knows by what advice. At the which time, after the adventure fallen to the person of my cousin Salisbury, whom God assoil, there fell by the hand of God, as it seemeth, a great stroke upon your people that was assembled there in great numbers, caused in great part, as I trow, by unfaithful doubt that they had of a disciple and limb of the Fiend, called the Maid, that used false enchantments and sorceries. The which stroke and discomforture not only lessened in great part the number of your people there, but, as well, withdrew the courage of the remainder in marvellous wise, and couraged your adverse party and enemies to assemble them forthwith in great number."

This was why the regent dared not risk a battle at Lamote-de-Nangis. His men were all unnerved, the Maid's all in brave spirits; and a defeat like Patay, within a march of Paris, would have ruined the English cause at a blow. The ancient fame of Bedford was, however, enough to disquiet Charles. Georges de la Trémouille, the Archbishop of Rheims, and Raoul de Gaucourt agreed with him

that there had been enough of fighting for the present, and suggested a negotiation with Burgundy. Meanwhile they advised him, always in accordance with his inclination, to retreat with his army beyond the Seine at Brie, as the first stage on the way back to his peaceful and pleasant palaces in Berry.

Brie, which was in the hands of a Burgundian garrison, promised Charles a quiet passage across the river; and to the intense vexation of the Maid, Alençon, Dunois, and all of the army who shared their sentiments, orders were given to march thither on the 4th of August. Before they arrived, however, it had occurred to the garrison that it would be easy to beat the enemy in retreat, and when Charles presented himself to cross, he found a force of English and Burgundians ready to contest the passage. His soldiers allowed themselves to be repulsed without difficulty, and to the high satisfaction of their leaders, at the demand of Jeanne d'Arc, Charles consented to turn his face once more towards Paris.

But this check and proffer at retreat caused much uneasiness in the places that had received the king, and especially in Rheims, where only a small garrison had been left, under the command of the archbishop's nephew, Antoine de Hellende. The citizens had heard a rumour of truce with Burgundy, a rumour that was true enough. The

duke had engaged Charles to a suspension of hostilities for a fortnight, leading him to expect a peaceful surrender of Paris at the expiration of the term. The Maid always distrusted delays, and was not afraid to lift up her protest against the king's chief advisers on this occasion. They prevailed against her advice; but what she thought of their arrangement, she expressed in a letter written to restore the confidence of the people of Rheims, the day after the repulse at Brie.

"My dear and good friends, the loyal French of the city of Rheims,—Jeanne the Maid lets you know of her news, and prays and requires that you will have no doubt of the good quarrel that she leads for the blood-royal. I promise and vow that I will never abandon you so long as I shall live. It is true that the king has made truce with the Duke of Burgundy for fifteen days, expecting that he will surrender the city of Paris peacefully at the end of the fifteen days. Nevertheless, be not astonished if I do not enter there so shortly. I am not contented with truces thus made, and I do not know whether I shall keep them; if I do keep them, it will be only to save the king's honour. However, they shall not mock the blood-royal; for I will hold together the army of the king, and be ready at the end of the fifteen days, if they do not make peace. For this, my dear and perfect friends,

I pray that you will give yourselves no uneasiness while I live, but keep good watch and ward of your good city; and let me know if there be any traitors who would do you wrong, and as quickly as I can, I will take them away; and send me news of you. God, to whom I commend you, have you in His care.

"Written this Friday, v. day of August, in a field-tent on the road to Paris."

On Sunday, the king dined, supped, and slept at Colommiers-en-Brie, and then proceeded by Château-Thierry, and through Ferté-Milon to Crépy-in-Valois. In this country, as soon as Charles and the Maid appeared, the townsfolk and peasantry ran out in crowds to meet them, crying *Noel!* and singing *Te Deum laudamus*, for joy.

At the entering into Crépy, Jeanne, who was riding between Dunois and the Archbishop of Rheims, said, with tears in her eyes, "Behold this good people! I have seen none yet who were so glad at the coming of their noble king. I wish I might be so happy, when I shall end my days, as to be buried in this earth."

The archbishop asked her, "O Jeanne, in what place do you hope to die?"

She answered him, "Wherever God wills. I know neither the time nor the place, any more than you know them; only I should be glad, if it pleased

God, my Creator, that I might now lay down my arms, and return home, to serve my father and mother, with my brothers and my sister, who would rejoice to see me."

In the midst of her tumultuous triumph, embarrassed daily more and more with difficulties and dangers, Jeanne's heart must have yearned often for rest and peace. But she never attempted to decline her ministry, though she made not infrequent allusions to her own death, as if she looked to it almost with hope. To her chaplain, Father Pasquerel, who was constantly with her, and knew her private life even more intimately than Jean d'Aulon, she repeatedly said that, if it should happen that she fell in this campaign, he was to tell the king from her to have a chapel built, and prayers made to Almighty God for the souls of all who had died in the war for the restoration of the kingdom.

The truce with Burgundy did not include a truce with the English, and the regent sent heralds with letters to Charles at Crépy, to give him notice that if he wanted battle he should have it. He had marched again with his host out of Paris as far as Mitry; and leaving some troops at Dammartin, Charles drew out the main body towards Lagny-le-Sec. The English had taken up a strong and very advantageous position, out of which the skirmishers

tried to draw them in vain. There was fighting at intervals through the day about the village of Thieux, but no general engagement; and at dusk Bedford retired with his army towards Senlis, camping in the fields about half a league from the city.

The next day, Sunday, August 14th, about vespers, the Maid, the Duke of Alençon, the Count of Vendôme, and other captains, with nearly seven thousand men, arrived in the plain near Montepilloy, not quite two leagues from Senlis. Bedford, with a rather superior force, lay about the little river Nonette, and the village of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, between them and the city. There was some light skirmishing the same evening, but when night fell, both sides drew off to their own camping-ground.

The Maid and her company, expecting to have battle in the morning, confessed, heard mass at dawn, and then got to horse. The captains drew out the army in order towards the English, but the latter kept quiet behind an entrenchment which they had thrown up during the night to protect them in front. The river Nonette guarded their rear. All day they would not come out except in small parties to skirmish, though the Free Lances tried them on every point. When the Maid saw they would not be provoked to stir, she took her Standard in her hand, and leading the van-

guard, rode down to attack them in their entrenchments. Many a time the chivalry of France had lost itself in such an attack, but now, with equal valour, they had more prudence. A sharp fight ensued, in which on both sides were many killed and wounded, but the main army of the English still held aloof, and refused to accept the challenge of the Witch-Maid. She and Alençon, as a last hope, then sent a herald to tell Bedford, that if he would give battle, they would draw back and wait until he had formed his men in order; but neither did this message bring him out. His policy was evidently to risk as little as possible while showing a face of defiance to the enemy, and he contented himself now with guarding the approaches to Senlis, and letting his men prove their force in hand-to-hand combats with their newly-emboldened adversaries. Many were the notable deeds of arms done on both sides in this fashion, but the day closed, and neither could claim a victory.

In the evening, the king, who had kept the field since morning, returned to sup and sleep at Crépy, but the Maid and the army stayed on the ground all night. Early the next day, they made a feint of retreating, to try if they could draw the English out in pursuit. But their stratagem failed. They had retired beyond Montépilloy, and halted in expectation, when the scouts, about noon, came in, bringing word that Bedford and his host had

passed by Senlis, and were marching direct for Paris.

The king remained three days at Crépy, and thence despatched heralds to summon Compiègne, Senlis, and Beauvais. Compiègne was a very pleasant town, and contained a favourite royal residence. It sent the king its keys immediately on his demand, and he set out forthwith to take up his quarters there. His truce with Burgundy had just expired; but the duke, instead of surrendering Paris, as he had promised, only sent his nephew, Jean of Luxembourg, to gain a further delay by pretences of negotiation. His envoy amused Charles with abundant promises of peace, but he said nothing except to deceive him, and the Maid and all his true friends were intensely exasperated at the weakness with which he let himself be befooled; for in these offers at treaty they saw only cunning expedients for deferring an advance on Paris until the city could be put into a state of defence, and the dispirited English troops replaced by a strong Burgundian garrison.

Charles, however, supported in his opinions by Georges de la Trémouille, the Archbishop of Rheims, and Raoul de Gaucourt, who had become quite the apostle of peace since the glory of the Maid had eclipsed that of the most renowned captains, determined to try the effect of a solemn embassy on

the prince who had only just mocked his credulity with fallacious promises, and impudently broken his word. The duke was then at Arras, and thither the archbishop, De Gaucourt, and Christopher de Harcourt, were despatched with a dignified escort to open new negotiations.

Meanwhile the king rested in Compiègne, and one important city after another returned to his obedience. Senlis demurred to his summons at first, and the Count of Vendôme and Marshal de Boussac were sent to reduce it by force. When they appeared with a strong detachment of soldiers, the inhabitants began to review the rapid successes of the king by means of the Maid, and to reflect further that the Duke of Bedford, with all his English power, had not ventured to give him battle. These considerations moved them to submit, and Vendôme took possession of the place as governor with a large garrison.

It happened at this moment that some of the Maid's people had been charged to buy her a horse, and the Bishop of Senlis, not being in high favour by reason of the tardy submission of his city, they took his favourite mare, with the connivance of Georges de la Trémouille, and also without paying for it. Jeanne gave a check for the price, which was two hundred gold crowns, but on trial she did not find the prelate's sleek and handsome beast strong enough to carry her in arms, and hearing

also that he had been disinclined to part with it, she sent him a message that it was of no use to her, and he might have it back if he liked. Somebody else was, however, well pleased with it, and it never found its way home to the bishop's stall. He got neither his money nor his mare—a misadventure which Jeanne believed La Trémouille could have best explained. But she heard of the transaction again, under very different circumstances, as an iniquitous misdeed and mortal sin of her own.

After Senlis, the city of Beauvais made its submission. The bishop, Pierre Cauchon, was vehemently attached to the cause of Burgundy and England, and he opposed the surrender with all his might. But in vain. The moment the royal heralds appeared, the populace began to sing *Te Deum*, and to shout, "Long live Charles, King of France!" Warning was given to all false French to quit the place. They were to go in peace, and carry away their goods; but none who refused to swear obedience to the king were suffered to stay within its walls. Amongst other fugitives departed the bishop, and betook himself to Rouen, in a fury of rage against Charles. He was the dear and valued friend of the Duke of Burgundy—a learned and magnificent prelate, but a corrupt and artful man, and of inordinate ambition. At Rouen he found the Cardinal-bishop of Winchester, and henceforward he made himself the evil coun-

sellor, and also the tool of the English court. With him fled his chaplain, Nicolas Venderez, archdeacon of Eu, and Jean d'Estivet, canon of Beauvais and Bayeux, and proctor-general of his diocese. Both continued in his service, and became by and by his aiders and abettors in the crime which has made his name infamous to all posterity.

The castle and town of Creil had been taken by assault from a Burgundian garrison, and this capture having opened a way into Normandy, La Hire, Saintrailles, and a few more adventurous captains, made several forays into that favourite province of the English, in the course of which they got possession of the fortress of Aumâle, of Torcy, only four leagues south of Dieppe, of Estrepagny, near the high road from Paris to Rouen, and of the famous old Château-Gaillard, within seven leagues of Rouen itself—the four strongest places in that territory. The Constable de Richemont, determined to help Charles in spite of La Trémouille, had recovered for him several castles on the borders of Maine and Anjou, and was now menacing Evreux. The ambassadors to Arras had found an eager disposition in the cities of Burgundy northwards to return to the obedience of Charles—in fact, it appeared to depend only on his own courage and goodwill whether he should recover his kingdom at once or not.

Unfortunately, such courage and goodwill as the

hour demanded were lacking to him; and instead of a swift deliverance, France endured a still lengthened agony. His envoys returned to Compiègne, reporting well of the people, but obliged to confess that they had been unable to conclude anything decisive with the Duke of Burgundy. Jeanne d'Arc, instructed by his neglect of her letters, and his previous breach of faith with the king, had anticipated no other result, and had constantly urged Charles to act like a man, and no longer delay his advance on the capital. It was now the 22d of August—more than five weeks since the coronation—and during that interval, if much had been gained for the royal cause, much also had been lost. Jeanne was well aware of it, and so were the military commanders, but there was nevertheless a strong desire amongst them to make an attack on Paris. Charles, however, manifested no inclination to stir from his pleasant quarters at Compiègne, and they agreed, finally, to march forward without him. Jeanne had been able to distinguish Paris from the heights above Dammartin, and she longed to be in it. She said to the Duke of Alençon, "My beautiful duke, make your men get ready, and the other captains; for, by my Martin, I will go and see Paris nearer than I have seen it yet!" The duke desired no better, and immediate orders were issued to a part of the army to prepare for the road.

They were all waiting in order, and the Maid was just about to mount her horse for a start, when there arrived a messenger, bringing her a letter from the Count of Armagnac, to which he required a reply. Some of the captains, vexed at the delay, muttered a threat about tossing the bearer of the inopportune missive into the river, but Jeanne insisted on hearing it read, and on dictating a brief answer to her secretary. She then set forward with all her company on the first stage towards Saint-Dénis.

The Count of Armagnac was in Arragon at the time of his correspondence with Jeanne d'Arc, and his letter evidences what manner of report of her had flown into foreign countries, and was believed by those not at enmity with France.

"MY VERY DEAR LADY,—I recommend myself humbly to you, and pray you for God's sake, that, considering the division which is at present in the Holy Church universal because of the popes, (for there are three contenders for the Papacy: the one lives at Rome, who calls himself Martin V., whom all Christian kings obey; another lives at Paniscole, in the kingdom of Valence, who calls himself Clement XII.; the third no one knows where he lives, unless it be the Cardinal Saint Etienne and the few people who are with him, who calls himself Benoit XIV.; the first, who is called Martin, was

elected at Constance by the consent of all nations of Christians; he who is called Clement was elected at Paniscole, after the death of Pope Benoit XIII., by three of his cardinals; the third, who is called Benoit XIV., was also elected at Paniscole secretly by the Cardinal Saint Etienne,) you will deign to supplicate our Lord Jesus Christ, that for His infinite mercy He will declare to us by you, which of the three above named is true pope, and which it will please Him that we henceforward obey—him who is called Martin, or him who is called Clement, or him who is called Benoit—and which we ought to believe, secretly, or by some public manifesto: for we are ready to do the will and pleasure of our Lord Jesus Christ.—In everything yours,

"COUNT OF ARMAGNAC."

Between the writing of this letter and its delivery to Jeanne, the schism in the Church had come to an end, and Martin V. had been confirmed in possession of the pontifical chair. Jeanne was, perhaps, not amazed at this appeal to her as an oracle through whom God would declare His will. Since the coronation, the world had set no bounds to its expectations from her. The destruction of the Englishry in France was proclaimed to be the least part of her mission. Another prophecy was now in all mouths, which was interpreted to mean that she should accomplish the old dream of the

Crusaders, recover the Holy Land, wrest Jerusalem from the infidels, and die there, after assuring the universal triumph of the faith. She had brief leisure to be still; brief leisure to pray for the guidance of her divine *counsel;* and her *voices* spoke with an uncertain sound. The multitude would have her the inspired envoy of God, to whom His hidden things were not secret. For a little while she suffered herself to be exalted. For a little while she was tempted to trespass beyond the limits of her true vocation, and, perhaps to strengthen herself against her opponents in the court, to pretend to the gifts popular acclaim ascribed to her. Her answer to the Count of Armagnac's letter was cited against her afterwards, as evidence of such impious presumption.

✠ JHESUS ✠ MARIA.

"Count of Armagnac, my very dear and good friend, I, Jeanne the Maid, let you know that your messenger has arrived, by whom you have sent to inquire of me which of the three popes you ought to believe. Of this matter I cannot well inform you until I am in Paris or elsewhere at rest; at present I am too busy with the war; but when you shall hear that I am in Paris, send me a messenger, and I will let you know truly which you ought to believe, when I shall have learned it by the counsel of my rightful and sovereign Lord, the

King of all the earth. To God I commend you. God have you in His keeping.

"Written at Compiègne on the twenty-second day of August."

The king followed the army as far as Senlis, and there he presented the Maid with a beautiful horse, which had been bought for her by his orders at Rheims. Before leaving the city on her grand enterprise against Paris, she, the Duke of Alençon, and the Count of Clermont, received the Eucharist together from the hands of Brother Richard. On the following Friday, they arrived with all their company at Saint-Dénis, and the place gave them ready admittance. It could not, indeed, refuse it, for it had neither strong fortifications nor strong garrison.

The surrender of Senlis to Charles had been felt as a very severe blow by the English regent. The disposition of the people there and elsewhere augured ill for the fidelity of the capital. He had bad news too from Normandy, of how the Constable de Richemont was ravaging the country round Evreux; and dreading lest the whole province might rise in revolt, when it heard of what was doing for the king in other parts, he resolved to leave Paris in the government of L'Isle-Adam and his Burgundians, and to carry all his English troops to Rouen. Before his departure, he as-

sembled the magistrates and chief citizens, and caused them to swear an oath that they would defend the place, and continue to live in peace and union with Henry VI., according to the terms of the treaty of Troyes. Then, in great doubt and anger, he went his way into Normandy.

The advance of the royal army to Saint-Dénis could not fail, under the circumstances, to throw the authorities of Paris into consternation. Both Bedford and Burgundy had withdrawn from the city. The commonalty were quite ready to cry *Noel!* and sing *Te Deum*, if the king came; for they might gain, and could hardly lose by a change of masters; but there were others above the commonalty, who had much to fear from the triumph of the Armagnacs. The Maid had pledged Charles to receive to mercy all who asked it, and no single act of cruelty or treachery had been done in his cause since she raised her Standard; but they only knew Jeanne in Paris by the report of the English who had fled before her in the valley of the Loire, and from the walls of Orleans, and that report represented her as more redoubtable than all the hosts she led, and vile as the worst imagination could conceive. The University was strong in the interests of the regent; the soldiers of Burgundy were good for a stout defence, and they had everything withal to make it. Charles's slow march from Rheims had given them ample leisure

to provide against his coming, and they had done it well.

Nevertheless there were elements of danger in the city — loyal French, moderate French, fair-weather French, and possibly traitors in posts of trust. And more to be feared, because more influential than any, there were the clergy, who in other places had been the first to welcome Charles. To guard against this numerous class, Louis of Luxembourg, Bishop of Thourenne, and Chancellor of France for Henry VI., came to the Parliament House, where were assembled the presidents and counsellors of the three chambers, the Bishop and Provost of Paris, the Abbot of Châtillion, the Prior of Corbeil, the Priors of the Jacobins, Carmelites, and Celestines, and a number of other churchmen and officials, and instituted certain persons to receive the oaths of all the clergy in the city, regulars and seculars. These clerks visited the churches, chapels, and convents to swear the priests and monks, their circuit occupying several days. Meantime public business was at a stand, the courts of law were empty, and the court of parliament deserted, except by a few members who met to concert measures of resistance against Charles and the Maid.

It was supposed that the Armagnacs counted as much for the reduction of the city on the influence of the king's name as on their power of arms, and

to destroy this possible charm, a report was diligently circulated that Charles had sworn to pass the plough over Paris, and to give up to indiscriminate slaughter all its inhabitants — men and women, young and old, great and small. This sufficed to alarm the timid and credulous of every class and condition; and the arbitrary style in which loans were levied on the churches, the ecclesiastics, and well-to-do citizens, for the pay and entertainment of the soldiers charged with the defence of the city, proved how imminent was the peril against which the men in power felt they had to provide. Their ill-concealed fears spread widely amongst the populace.

The Maid was convinced, when she arrived first at Saint-Dénis, as were also many of the most sagacious men about her, that all that was needed to draw the perturbed capital over to the king's obedience was, that he should present himself before it with the same countenance of firmness and mercy as he had shown to the great provincial cities. But his heart was plainly not in the expedition—he seemed afraid of the trouble of too much success. He lingered on in his agreeable retreats at Compiègne and Senlis ten days more, and each day lost was so much subtracted from his chances of entering Paris either peaceably or by force of arms.

Those who fought his quarrel for him did not,

however, spare themselves, small as were the thanks they got for their devotion. There were daily skirmishes before the walls of Paris, now in one place, and now in another. The Maid shared in them all, the Duke of Alençon going out most frequently with her. They made themselves thoroughly acquainted with the situation of the city, and decided that when an attack was made, it would be most advisable to make it near the gate of Saint-Honoré.

Though Jeanne's brave and hopeful spirit rose above discouragement, Charles's indifference could not fail to have an effect upon her. He was the very root of her heart, the living centre of her ministry. God and the king, the king and France —she could not sever them in her idea. The coldness of Charles dimmed the vividness of her inspiration. She seemed to lose all at once that full assurance of victory which had nerved her at Orleans, at Jargeau, at Patay, through the march to Rheims. But she dissembled her uncertainties. The crowd of brave young captains who were with her had set their minds on performing some great feat of arms before Paris, and it would not have been like her to hold them back. Her *voices* said neither *yea* nor *nay* to the enterprise, but it was always good, she thought, good in all seasons and all circumstances, to go against the enemy.

She did her utmost, therefore, to make the ad-

venture end well. She sent a messenger to beg Charles to come to Saint-Dénis, that his presence amongst the soldiers might animate them with fresh courage and confidence. He replied that he would come on the 2d of September. The day arrived, but he did not appear. This disappointment irritated Jeanne. She saw her plans thwarted at a time when she had about her an army that would follow her anywhere to do anything. The men had hitherto obeyed her marvellously, but success and inaction were undermining her strict discipline. Accustomed to see in sin the cause of all failure and disaster, she had threatened to abandon their company if they did not live so as to deserve the goodwill of God. She had compelled them to put a check on their profane and ribald talk, had induced them to observe the formal ordinances of religion, and to refrain from pillaging the poor. The immodest women who haunted the purlieus of the camp she would not suffer in her sight, and very carefully had they been made to avoid it. But one day, at Saint-Dénis, the mistress of a man at-arms ventured to come flaunting by, mounted on his horse, when Jeanne was riding with the Duke of Alençon. Furious at the insult, the Maid drew her sword, and as the woman started off in terror, Jeanne rode after her, overtook her, and struck her with the flat of the blade. By the force of the blow, the blade was broken,

and fell ringing on the stones. The sword was the sacred sword of Saint Katherine-de-Fierbois. Charles told her that she should have taken a good stick, and not have broken her good sword. He was much displeased at the mishap, and she was bitterly ashamed of her unchristian rage. The sword was sent to the armourers to be refounded, but they could not do it; and the people and soldiers always dated the failure of the Maid's good luck from the day when it was broken.

Jeanne, however, was not superstitious. She had loved that sword very much, but she immediately girt on another—a good sword of war, which she had taken by her own prowess from a Burgundian soldier. She sent a second messenger to Charles, and as he still did not come, the Duke of Alençon went over to him at Senlis, and said so much, that the next day after dinner he set out, and the same evening arrived at Saint-Dénis. The Maid and the soldiers were rejoiced at his coming, and there was not a man of any condition in the whole army who did not say: "She will put the king in Paris if it depends only on her."

The main body of the troops had been moved forward on the previous day to La Chapelle, a village midway between Saint-Dénis and Paris. This place was to be the base of their operations, and at eight o'clock on the morning of the Feast of the blessed Virgin's Nativity, the army set out in beau-

tiful order towards the capital. It was divided into two main parties: one, led by Raoul de Gaucourt and the Marshal de Retz, was to give the assault; the other was to guard from surprise, and bring succour to the first. Alençon, Dunois, La Hire, Saintrailles, Ambrose de Loré Vendôme, Clermont, Laval—all the young captains followed the Standard of the Maid, expectant of honour and glory, and the men were confident of good success. When had she ever led them but to victory?

It was nearly eleven when the royal army took up its position in an open space, called the Swine-Market, which extended from the gate of Saint-Honoré, to a piece of elevated ground where stood a windmill, the scene of many a skirmish during the past week. The artillery was placed at various points, and opened a vigorous fire at once on the ramparts, which was as vigorously answered. Being a great feast-day, all the churches were full; and there the trembling people stayed until about noon, when suddenly there rose a cry through the city that the enemy had forced their way in, and all was lost. At that alarm, the priests were left alone at the altars, and everybody fled to his own house, and made fast his door. Amongst the many quaking hearts in Paris that day, there could hardly have been one more anxious than that of Queen Isabeau, who was living neglected and degraded in the palace of the Count of Saint-Pol.

The panic within the city was, however, premature. There was heavy slaughter both on and under the walls, but no sign of a breach. A gentleman of Dauphiny and his men made a dashing attack on the redoubt before the gate of Saint-Honoré, and set it on fire, compelling its defenders to retire into the city. There was some stiff hand-to-hand fighting here, and the Maid, who was engaged in it, took a sword from one of the enemy. In anticipation that a sally would be made from the gate of Saint-Dénis, Alençon and Clermont formed an ambuscade near the windmill; but their pains were wasted; for, to the close of the day, no more of the garrison ventured beyond the ramparts.

This caution emboldened the assailants, and about two o'clock the Maid determined to lead the attack to the foot of the wall. With her Standard flying, and followed by a great company of soldiers, commanded by Marshal de Retz, she crossed the dry moat, and mounted the narrow ridge dividing it from the inner moat, which was deep water and mud. She tried the depth of it with her lance at various points, under a hail of fire and a whistling storm of arrows and cross-bolts, while her men brought logs and faggots in great quantities to fill a passage over. She was thus engaged when the soldier who carried her Standard was wounded in the foot by an arrow. He raised the visor of his helmet to see to draw it out, when a second arrow

struck him between the eyes, and pierced to the brain. He fell dead at the Maid's side—a very brave and faithful soldier, of whom she said that she could have better spared any forty men in her company.

The Burgundians on the walls mingled curses and execrations with their flights of shafts; but Jeanne paid them no heed, except to cry, "Surrender the city to the King of Heaven and King Charles!" She was herself presently wounded in the thigh with an arrow; but the sharp pain only spurred her to fiercer exertions. By voice and example, she encouraged the men to be diligent and firm, and to labour to bridge the moat, so that she and they might reach the wall, when the city would certainly be won. But the water was high in the moat, and hour after hour passed before they appeared to have made any advance. The Burgundians stood steadily to their posts at the defence of gate and wall, and inflicted terrible losses on the crowd of assailants. The sun set, and Jeanne still worked and hoped, but the men began to flag. She insisted upon it, that if they would persevere, the place would yield—was showing signs of weakness and wavering. All her victories had been won by long labour, and a sudden rush on the exhausted foe at a moment when, if she had listened to her fellow-commanders, the troops would have been withdrawn, the day's work wasted, and the near success abandoned. But she had not now

to deal with young Dunois or La Hire, but with Raoul de Gaucourt, who had discountenanced the enterprise he had undertaken to conduct, and, with an old soldier's jealousy of new ways, and new fame higher than his own, was not perhaps altogether sorry to see it fail. In defiance of her wishes, he ordered the retreat to be sounded; and when, after several messages, she still refused to come away, he went himself, and with two or three others, took her forcibly out of the throng, set her on horseback, and brought her off.

"By my Martin!" cried Jeanne, indignant and enraged, "the place *might* have been taken!"

They led her away to La Chapelle with the rout of the discomfited army, and at her lodgings in the village, gave her up to Jean d'Aulon, who had her wound dressed, and made her lie down to sleep. But very early in the morning she was awake and afoot, and had sent for Alençon to entreat that he would have the trumpets sounded for a return to Paris; swearing by her bâton, that she would never go away from the city until she had it. The duke and many of the captains had as much goodwill for the enterprise as herself, but De Gaucourt and others vehemently opposed it. While the discussion was going on, there arrived from within Paris the Baron de Montmorency, who had hitherto sided with Burgundy and England, but who now presented himself with from fifty to sixty gentlemen, to make

his submission to the king, and join the royal army. This evidence of the vacillating temper of the city was a fresh incitement to those who were of good heart and courage to renew the assault, and in great exhilaration and hope they prepared for the march.

But news of the last night's retreat, the day's losses, and the Maid's wound, had been carried to the king at Saint-Denis, and before they could set out, the Duke of Bar and the Count of Clermont arrived, bringing a special command from him for the abandonment of the enterprise against the capital altogether. The Maid was entreated to rejoin him immediately, and not to think of going forward again, and Alençon was ordered to go at once to Saint-Denis, and to carry her with him.

Full of grief, discontent, and wrath, Jeanne obeyed, but she still cherished a hope of finding her way into Paris, by getting at it from another side, across a bridge over the Seine, which Alençon had caused to be constructed near Saint-Denis. Charles, however, learnt her intention, and it being reported to him that she, Alençon, Dunois, and the rest of his more zealous friends meant to try the passage at dawn the next morning, he put a peremptory check upon their march by setting men to work all night to break the bridge down.

And here was an end of the Maid's hopes of carrying the king into Paris.

XI.

THE RETREAT BEYOND THE LOIRE.

AFTER the retreat from La Chapelle, the king, the Maid, and the army remained in and around Saint-Denis for four days. Charles held frequent councils—he and his favourites always inclining to return beyond the Loire, and treat with Burgundy for a peaceful surrender of Paris; Jeanne, Alençon, and the greater number of the military commanders, inclining to stay, and push their re-conquests by force of arms.

The Maid did not bear her reverse with passive indifference or patience. It was useless to try and console her by lauding her intrepid courage in going to the assault of such a strong city as Paris, when she was withheld from achieving success—which she believed she could achieve—by the fears and feeble vacillation of the king, and the selfish perversity of his confidential advisers. It seemed

to her a cruel thing when so many cities, towns, and country districts had submitted to him, trusting in his protection, to leave the English and Burgundians in possession of a place from which they could any day march out to wreak their vengeance on those who had deserted them. The people had begun, of late, to live quietly and prosperously under the rule of the English regent; and for Charles to abandon them, after the sacrifices they had made in his favour, was base and cowardly in the extreme.

He did not, however, appear to see it in that light. After dinner on Tuesday, September 13, he quitted Saint-Denis, leaving a small garrison behind in charge of the Count of Vendôme and the Admiral du Culant. He had determined to return to Gien, and had given a safe-conduct to the Duke of Burgundy to come or to send envoys to negotiate a peace with him there. Jeanne's *voices* bade her stay where she was, and so she told Charles, entreating him to leave her behind. But he would not hearken to her, and when she saw that there was no help for it, and that absolutely she must go, she took her armour in which she had been wounded before Paris, and like a devout Catholic soldier, carried it into the Abbey-church, and hung it upon a pillar before the altar of the Virgin,—an offering to her and the saint whose name was the cry of France: *God and Saint Denis!* Her father was still at Rheims when she made her hopeful advance on Paris; but during

these last days, the council of the city had provided him with a horse, and he had gone home to Domremy: perhaps his last news of his daughter being that the ebb in the tide of her great fortunes had begun. Her sprightly little page, Louis de Contes, had vanished from her train; and with a heavy heart and profound regrets, she set out in the evening to follow the king to Lagny-sur-Marne.

Lagny was entrusted to keep to Ambrose de Loré, and Jean Foucault, a valiant captain of archers, but a very ruthless, bad man. Charles rested there one night, and the next day marched through Provins, and crossed the Seine at Brie. Thence he came to Sens, where he experienced a manifest decline already in popular favour. The city refused him obedience, or even a passage by its bridge over the Yonne. He was, consequently, reduced to cross with all his army and attendants by a ford some distance above the city. He then proceeded by quick marches to Courtney, to Château-Regnard, Montargis, and Gien, where he arrived on the 21st of the month. The Maid was with him, and the remnant that was left of the twelve thousand soldiers who had accompanied him to Rheims. Great numbers had been dispersed into garrison here and there, to keep the cities he had recovered, and the rest now quickly melted away.

"And thus was the will of the Maid and the royal army broken."

At Gien the king remained for some time, awaiting a reply from the Duke of Burgundy to another offer of accommodation, which was to be made to him by the Archbishop of Rheims and the Count of Clermont. When the reply came, it was another delusion and disappointment. The duke refused to make a full peace; but he agreed on a truce with Charles, to continue through the winter until Easter. One article of it was the surrender to him of Pont-de-Maxence, an important post on the line of the Oise; and but for the firm resistance of the inhabitants of Compiègne and their governor, Guillaume de Flavy, that city, which was the key to the position, would also have been abandoned to him. This arrangement, which the king consented to, entirely suited Burgundy's interests. As soon as Charles's hands were bound, he began to re-confirm his often-shaken alliance with the English regent, who had returned to Paris with a great force of men-at-arms immediately news reached him in Rouen that the king and the Maid had left its neighbourhood, and retired again beyond the Loire.

What Jeanne d'Arc had foreseen as the probable fate of the poor people who had submitted to the king, did not delay to come to pass. The little garrison left at Saint-Denis took alarm, and abandoning the place, retreated to Senlis. Immediately swooped down upon the town a flight of skirmish-

ers, and pillaged it, carrying off, by order of the Bishop of Thourenne, the Maid's armour from the church, "without making any compensation, which was manifest sacrilege."

Shortly after the regent, the Duke of Burgundy arrived in the capital with six thousand Picards, "as big thieves as any who had entered it since the war began." Next came the Cardinal-bishop of Winchester—more like a soldier than a priest—and councils were held daily on the ways and means for the war and the civil government. The Parliament, the University, and the chief citizens—all violent partisans of Burgundy—desired that their city should be entrusted to him as regent of France, and that Bedford should be henceforward only governor of Normandy. Bedford rejected this proposal. He would not resign his nominal dignity as regent; but at the instance of the people, he consented to give up Paris to be kept by Burgundy, as his lieutenant. This being settled to the duke's satisfaction, he agreed to meet the regent at Easter with an army, and to assist him in recovering the cities in the Isle-of-France, and on the river Oise, which had acknowledged Charles. If he wished to fight meanwhile, he must fight without his ally, who had secured for himself a cessation of hostilities, in which Paris and its environs were to be included, and who had great affairs of his own to despatch in Flanders.

The letters of truce concluded between Charles and Burgundy were publicly read in the hall of Parliament, as was also the commission of the regent, appointing the duke his lieutenant in Paris; and on the 17th of October, the regent again quitted the capital, and returned to Rouen. Almost directly after, Burgundy went too, his pressing business being to prepare for the reception of his bride, a princess of Portugal, who was expected soon to arrive in Flanders. Before his departure, he made L'Isle-Adam captain of Paris; and as he marched out with his Picards, he caused a proclamation to be made through the city that, if the Armagnacs came, the inhabitants were at liberty to defend themselves as well as they were able,—which sounded like derision and mockery, for he left them but a very poor garrison. Charles had pledged himself to a cessation of arms for months; but if he could have presented himself before the capital, while the people were sore and indignant at their sudden abandonment by their favourite ruler, the chances were more in favour of a surrender than they had been at any moment since the first news was published of his coronation at Rheims.

The truce, so far as the peasantry of the reconquered districts were concerned, meant nothing but misery. No sooner were the king, the regent, and Burgundy safe beyond the Loire, in Rouen, and at

Arras, than there began once more a period of dreadful tribulation in the parts that had returned to the obedience of Charles. These parts were naturally rich, and now in high cultivation, but they were soon so wasted with rapine that hardly a labourer was left in the fields, and the villages again became desert places. The towns and cities also, abiding in constant peril, unable to send out or to receive commodities, grew wretchedly impoverished, and nothing prospered unless it were those bands of irregular soldiers whose trade was war, and their living the pillage of the people. The forlorn outcasts and fugitives they made that bitter winter were very patient, if they did not many a time curse the day when they saw the faces of the king and the Maid.

From Gien Charles proceeded to Selles in Berry, whither the queen came to welcome him back. There she received the salutations of Jeanne d'Arc, who afterwards accompanied the court to Bourges. The Duke of Alençon thence went his way to his sweet wife and his castle at Beaumont, and the other captains departed each to his own frontier. Jeanne missed them all, but Alençon most, "for much she loved him, and would do for him what she would do for none other."

No news that was good came from north of the Loire to cheer and comfort her in the unnatural

monotony of the court-life she was constrained to lead for some weeks after the return from Rheims. She was everywhere the centre of love, admiration, wonder, but she was happier at work than in the midst of all this worship. Treatises were written at home and abroad to prove that her life and labours bore the impress, and were guided by the Holy Spirit, that she was a prophetess, a saint, a sibyl superior to the sibyls of antiquity. Masses and prayers were constantly said for her in the churches; images of her were multiplied. A medal was struck in her honour, bearing the legend, *Sustained by the counsels of God.* Foreign princes sent embassies to inquire about her. The Duke of Milan wrote to crave her help in recovering some territory of which he had been dispossessed, addressing her as "The very honourable and devout maid Jeanne, sent by the King of Heaven for the extirpation of the English tyranny in France."

But Jeanne's hour of intoxication was past. She had time to listen to her *counsel* again, and all these things only vexed and wearied her soul. She sought rest after her old fashion. Her chaplain had orders to warn her always of the day when the children of the poor made their first communion in any chapel of the mendicant friars, and thither she went to receive it with them. Her tenderness to the suffering and her charity became conspicuous. She was in the constant habit of giving money to her almoner

to be distributed amongst the indigent; and when he sometimes objected that she gave almost more than she could spare, she replied that it was part of her mission to succour the poor.

Jean d'Aulon once asked her to tell him what the *counsel* was that guided her life. She did not like to be idly inquired of: perhaps she could not clearly define it to herself; but she answered him: "My *counsel* is three. One *voice* stays with me always, another goes and comes, and visits me often, and with the third both deliberate." *Conscience*, and *prayer* as informing it from God, would seem to be symbolised in her mystical words: and in her ecstatic moods, when their biddings and responses thrilled in the bells and wind-murmurings, she welcomed them as the utterance of her guardian saints, direct messages from heaven.

While at Bourges, Jeanne resided in the house of the royal treasurer, Regnier de Bouligny, and under the care of his wife Margaret, one of the queen's ladies. They associated familiarly together, Dame Margaret sleeping always in Jeanne's room, going with her to early morning prayers, and keeping her constant company. Jeanne was apparently more under restraint in private life than when in the camp, in the midst of her men-at-arms, with her faithful knights and squires to attend upon her. At Bourges she would never go out alone, nor would she ever receive any visitor after sunset.

One of the old chroniclers speaks of the gay young gentlemen of the court trying to win her favour by coming into her presence finely dressed, and full of airs and graces; but Jeanne's modest self-possession soon disconcerted their impertinence, and froze their vagrant fancies. She was, indeed, after all her achievements, the same warm-hearted, pure-minded, generous girl as when she left Domremy; and still, except in harness, reserved, quiet, and simple in all her ways.

Devout as Jeanne was, her mind had not a taint of superstition. She repudiated and resisted the obstinate popular notion that she possessed any of those small magical powers which credulous minds believed in then, and believe in now. Many women of Bourges came to the treasurer's house, bringing crosses and chaplets for her to touch, expecting that they would receive thereby a peculiar virtue of holiness; but Jeanne would laugh at their fancy, and even while humouring it, would turn to Dame Margaret and say, "*You* touch them: your touch is as good as mine."

Some persons professed to think she bore a charmed life; and one day a visitor, conversing with her, remarked that she need never fear going to an assault, for she was sure not to fall. Jeanne replied that she had no more guarantee for her life than any other soldier in the army. Her wounds sufficiently attested that; and her freedom from overweening confidence was shown in her making

always before she went out to fight, the pious preparations of a Christian hero to meet God, if she should die in the battle.

Many assumptions and assertions were made for Jeanne, of which she endured the blame, but which she would never have made, and never have dreamed of making for herself. The Archbishop of Rheims, who asked her where she hoped to die, and the Count of Armagnac, who invited her to heal the wounds of the Church, were no wiser than the silly gossips of Bourges who brought their amulets for her to sanctify. Her passionate, impetuous, or foreboding words, if a sort of fulfilment followed them, were exalted into prophecies; as if those casual impressions and presentiments which haunt all imaginative minds, and come and go, and are realised a time by chance, could, by exaggeration, be made to add dignity to the one lofty purpose and inspiration of her life. The supernatural halo that an affectionate false enthusiasm had thrown over her before she had been a quarter of a century dead, vanishes when the great things she achieved, the recorded words she spoke, the long martyrdom she suffered, are analysed in their full and natural sense; but the figure of the Maid, unveiled, is grander, nobler, far more pathetic in the pure light of truth than ever it was under the stage-lamp of passion, which deepened its shadows, heightened its lights, and softened into vagueness the severe and simple majesty of its outline.

XII.

THE CHECK BEFORE LA CHARITÉ.

WHILE the unoccupied days lagged heavily with Jeanne d'Arc at the court, the English were doing diligently to repair the disasters that had come upon them by her means. Lord Scales laid siege to the castle of Saint-Celerin, in the territory of the Duke of Alençon, which Ambrose de Loré came from Lagny-sur-Marne to defend. The besiegers bombarded the place for ten days, and then gave a great assault, which continued nearly five hours, and ended in a complete repulse. The next morning they marched away, nothing done. They then tried Lagny, which Jean Foucault and Hugh Kennedy defended with the same good fortune as Ambrose de Loré had defended Saint-Celerin; and thence also the English retired defeated. An attack on Creil was not more successful; but a plot formed to betray Rouen to

Poton de Saintrailles and the Count of Vendôme failed, as it was said, for want of a moonlight night to favour their march.

The importance of Château-Gaillard to whichever side held it, and the heavy charge it was to the English while it was occupied by the king's men, made the regent extremely anxious to dispossess them before they could supply it with materials of war, and provisions to stand a long siege. He made haste to send troops from Rouen to invest it; but unless by such a sudden surprise as had enabled La Hire to take it in a few hours, this eagle's nest was a place very hard to capture. Seven months passed over before the English recovered this ancient fortress; and during that interval happened many events more momentous, and reverses more serious for Charles.

After spending a few weeks at Beaumont, the Duke of Alençon assembled a force to go by the marches of Maine and Brittany into Normandy, as had been projected before the progress to Rheims. He then made a request to the king to give him the Maid, pleading that many soldiers would join his company to follow her, who would not stir unless she went. But Charles was reluctant to let Jeanne leave the court; and Georges de la Trémouille, De Gaucourt, and the Archbishop of Rheims advised him not to suffer her to accompany the duke. Alençon's request was denied,

and he could never after recover Jeanne's inspiriting society in arms.

The disappointment to Jeanne was as severe as to the duke. She continued to preach the necessity she was under of pursuing her vocation; and as she could not be prevailed on to rest in peace, another expedition was planned for her instead of that to Normandy: an expedition against the towns about the Upper Loire, where the English and Burgundians still maintained their garrisons, and were a heavy charge to the peasantry and travelling merchants of the surrounding country. The Sire d'Albert, brother-in-law to Georges de la Trémouille, was appointed to the chief command; and at the beginning of November the army, few in number, and very insufficiently provided for a winter campaign, marched out of Bourges to go to the siege of Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier.

Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier was a small, strongly-fortified town about four leagues from the confluence of the rivers Allier and Loire. It lay in the cup of a valley surrounded by hills, and near a marshy lake, the exhalations from which were considered as peculiarly unwholesome. The siege did not make progress either swift or sure, but it being impossible for the troops to camp out long in such a place at that season, after it had continued a certain time, an assault was determined on. The Maid led it, and her men did their

utmost; but the garrison were numerous, and so well furnished with artillery that they soon compelled the French to retreat in confusion.

When her men fled, Jeanne was left behind, standing on the brink of the moat, with four or five soldiers only. Jean d'Aulon, who had been wounded in the heel some days before, and could not walk without crutches, when he saw her peril, seized a horse, and mounting it in pain and dismay, galloped to the moat to bring her off into a place of safety. Her danger provoked his wrath; he asked impatiently what she was doing there alone, and why she had not retired with the rest. Jeanne lifted her casque from her head, and looking at him astonished, said she was *not* alone—she had fifty thousand of her men with her, and she should not leave the place until it was taken.

One of those strange hallucinations, from which she appears to have been free during the active campaigns of the summer, had again taken possession of her here. D'Aulon urged her in vain to come away. She only ordered him to hasten the bringing up of faggots and logs to bridge the moat. Then suddenly addressing her phantom-army, she cried in a loud voice: "To work all the world! Bring faggots and logs to make the bridge!"

The soldiers who had retreated, came running back; the garrison on the ramparts seemed panic-stricken, like the garrisons in the English bastiles

before Orleans; and with the same sudden fury of attack and precipitate hurry of flight Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier was taken. Reginald Thierry, one of the king's surgeons, who had accompanied the Maid in this expedition, relates that in the heat of the storm and the exultation of victory, she was able to restrain her men from pillaging the church.

The capture of Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier was one of the few brilliant flashes of success that vivified the career of Jeanne d'Arc after the repulse before Paris. It brought her some accession of men under the Marshal de Boussac, though in the hard winter weather—and it was very hard—neither soldiers nor commanders could have much zeal for a campaign. Charles being quite at his ease, had relapsed into supine content and indifference, and Georges de la Trémouille, from the first inimical to the Maid, directed all public measures.

Jeanne wished to carry the army, while elated with its victory, into the Isle-of-France, where the English had just gained two considerable advantages. They had beaten the Count of Clermont, the hero of the battle of the Herrings, in an engagement near Beauvais, and they had recovered the castle of Aumâle. But La Trémouille would not afford her this chance of retrieving what she had lost at Paris. He declared that the entire valley of the Loire must be clean swept of the

enemy before anything else was attempted, and he gave orders that the army should march to the siege of La Charité, a very strong town on the Upper Loire. Jeanne consented to go—she never sought to save herself, let who would hang back. La Trémouille gave himself no anxiety as to how the work was to be done, and the equipment of the expedition was miserable. The jealous favourite, indeed, purposely designed to bring the Maid to another check, that her influence with the king, and her authority with the people, might be gradually destroyed by the multiplication of her failures. She was probably aware of his evil mind towards her. He was the only man, with whom her ministry brought her in contact, concerning whom she ever suffered a syllable to escape her lips, implying that she knew him to be not altogether honest and trustworthy.

Jeanne perceiving how little was done by others, or likely to be done, toiled hard herself at the preparations for her new enterprise. From Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier she had retired to Moulins, whence she wrote to the inhabitants of Riom, requesting succours for carrying on the campaign. Clermont-Ferrand had already been solicited, and had sent sulphur, saltpetre, two cases of arrows, a sword, and suit of armour for herself. Orleans had contributed money, two culverins, and a hundred stout men, well and warmly clothed in blouses of

thick blue woollen cloth, marked with a white cross—a welcome aid, but what were they to make a siege? Jeanne's letter to the people of Riom betrays on what a thankless undertaking she was bent. It lacks her superscription of JHESUS MARIA, and goes, at once, straight to the business and needs that occupy her.

"Dear and good friends, you know how the town of Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier has been taken by assault; and, with the help of God, I intend to clear the other places still adverse to the king; but as, because of the large expenditure of powder, arrows, and other munitions of war, which was made before that town, the lords who are here and I are but lightly provided to go to the siege of La Charité, where we shall presently be; I pray you, as you love the welfare and honour of the king, that you will send us aid for it: powder, saltpetre, sulphur, arrows, strong cross-bows, and any other munitions of war. And in this do so much that the thing may not be long for lack of powder and stores; and that none may say you have been negligent or churlish. Dear and good friends, our Lord have you in His keeping.

"JEANNE.

"Written at Moulins the 9th day of November.

"To my dear and good friends, the churchmen, citizens, and people of Riom."

This letter tells unconsciously of anxiety and care, of disappointment and ingratitude tasted in all their bitterness. Jeanne had encountered and had felt negligence and churlishness, in some quarter where she had a right to look for observance and liberality, before she warned Riom not to fall into those easy temptations of selfishness out of danger. She speaks without any thrill of her old exultant confidence—speaks wearily, pleadingly. And with a touch of feminine guile, as if to make the letter more precious, she signed it with her own hand, her secretary guiding it—for she could really neither read nor write. Then she sealed it with red wax from which the impression is gone now; but the mark of a finger on the reverse remains, and also a dark hair which appears to have been laid originally under the seal when the wax was soft.

The Sire d'Albret wrote to Riom in the king's name, to the same effect as the Maid, but much more urgently. His demand, however, brought forth little fruit; for when he arrived before La Charité with all the men, artillery, and munitions he had been able to collect, it soon became apparent that he was very inadequately provided for the siege of such a place.

The Maid's great deeds and great renown had, at this depressed moment, raised up an ambitious adventuress, eager to share her honours, without

any capacity for sharing her labours. This woman, known as Katherine of Rochelle, and who was married, gave herself out for a new spiritual envoy to the king, her messages being brought to her nightly by a white lady, habited in cloth of gold. She wished Charles to appoint her a herald and trumpeters to go about proclaiming that whoever had gold, silver, or treasure, should immediately bring it forth to pay the men-at-arms besieging La Charité. Katherine pretended to a gift of divination, by which she could tell who brought their all and who kept back some. Brother Richard, who seems to have been as credulous as he was eloquent, espoused Katherine's cause, and was very anxious to have her set to work; but when she opened her visions to Jeanne, Jeanne, who liked none but practical signs, told her curtly to go home to her husband, to guide her children, and keep her house.

The famous preacher was much displeased at the Maid's contempt for his opinion, and Jeanne thereupon consented to sleep with Katherine to receive a proof of her sincerity. The white lady, she said, visited her every night. Jeanne watched till twelve o'clock, saw nothing, was tired, and fell asleep. In the morning, she asked Katherine if her vision had appeared. She said it had, but at the moment of its appearance, Jeanne slept so soundly that it was impossible to wake her. To give Katherine fair

play, Jeanne took her rest in the day-time, and the next night, watched all night; but no white lady came. After this, the Maid told Charles the visions of Katherine of Rochelle were folly and sheer naught—a piece of plain-speaking which Katherine remembered against her with the spite of a deceptive woman unmasked.

One piece of reasonable advice this adventuress did, however, offer to the Maid—she counselled her not to go to the siege of La Charité while the weather was so bitterly cold. But Jeanne had nothing to do in the world but to work out her vocation, and now that she might no longer lead, she was content to follow. On the 24th of November she followed D'Albret to La Charité, to share whatever difficulties and dangers there might be for the army to meet. There was nothing else but difficulties and dangers; and after a term of severe suffering, the besiegers were obliged to abandon such bombards and cannon as they had been able to bring against the town, and to march ignominiously away; to the Maid's great grief and mortification, and to the exuberant joy of the Burgundian garrison.

XIII.

THE ENNOBLEMENT OF THE MAID.

THE court was at Meun-sur-Yévre when the siege of La Charité was raised, and thither the Maid retired after her defeat. Whatever Georges de la Trémouille, or others in his interests, might plot or wish, the king could only desire to keep up her *prestige*, and to restore the confidence of the soldiers and the people, supposing them to have been shaken by this second failure. Touched by her distress, he did all that lay in his power to console her, to testify his own respect, and to obliterate any ill-impression that might have been produced. It was during the month of December, that, in gratitude for her splendid services, Charles ennobled her, her family and all their posterity, male and female, for ever. Their name was changed to *Des Lys*, and armorial bearings—lilies of France on a field of azure, with a sword crowned in the

midst—were granted to them. Jeanne honoured the king, and loved him to the last breath of her life, and this proof of his love and honour for her could not but please her: though she would rather have had his goodwill and active help in pursuing her work, than all the dignities and favours he could idly and pleasantly lavish upon her.

Thus, in substance, runs the act of nobility granted by the king to the Maid :—

"Charles, by the grace of God king of France, in the perpetual memory of an event. To give glory to the high and Divine Wisdom, for the many and signal favours which it has pleased Him to confer upon us by the famous ministry of our dear and well-beloved, the Maid Jeanne d'Arc of Domremy, and which, by the aid of the Divine clemency, we hope to see yet multiplied: we judge it fit and opportune to elevate, in a manner worthy of our royal majesty, this Maid and all her family, not in recognition of her services only, but also to publish the praises of God, so that being thus made illustrious, she may leave to her posterity the monument of a recompense emanating from our royal liberality, to perpetuate to all ages the Divine glory, and the fame of so many graces. Therefore be it known, that in consideration of what has been just set forth, and also of the services rendered to us and our realm by the Maid Jeanne, and of those which we hope from her in the future, and also for certain

other causes inducing us, we have by our special grace, wisdom, and power ennobled the Maid, Jacques d'Arc of Domremy, his wife Isabelle, Jacquemin, Jean and Pierre, the father, mother, and brothers* of the Maid, and all her family and lineage, and in favour and consideration for her, their posterity, male and female, born and to be born, in lawful marriage. Desiring, therefore, expressly that the said Maid, Jacques, Isabelle, Jacquemin, Jean and Pierre, and the posterity born and to be born, as well of her as of them, be in all their acts received and reputed as nobles, and that they use and peaceably enjoy and profit by the privileges, liberties, prerogatives, and other rights which the other nobles of our realm are wont to use, notwithstanding that they be not of noble extraction, but be perhaps even of other than free condition: desiring also that the family and lineage of the Maid may, at their pleasure, be armed and decorated by any knight . . . . that they may acquire and hold fiefs . . . . and not be bound to us or our successors in any tribute by reason of this ennoblement . . . . of our plenary grace and power we do endow and hold them acquitted by these presents . . . . and that this may be a thing firm and stable for ever, we have sealed these presents with our seal. Given at Meun-sur-Yévre, in the month of December, the year of

* It would appear, from the omission of her name, that Jeanne's sister had died since her return from Paris.

our Lord one thousand four hundred and twenty-nine, and of our reign the eighth."

The witnesses were the Bishop of Séez, Georges de la Trémouille, and several others.

The ennoblement of the Maid might increase her secret enviers, but her friends it could not increase; for they believed her endowed already with a grace far beyond the conferring of any earthly sovereign. It was, however, a satisfaction to Charles to reflect that if he had crossed her *counsels* in some instances, he had rewarded her for those she had accomplished in the most honourable way in which a king can reward a subject. He retained her near him, and he, the great people of the court, and the people in general, treated her as a sort of divinity. She had now the household and income of a count, girls of noble birth were her companions, and Charles required her to put on the toga, a long and stately robe worn only by princes and grandees. He presented her with such a robe himself, made of precious cloth of gold; and dressed in the fashion of a man, she appeared in it over her armour, her hair trimmed round, her hat looped, her tunic short, and her scarlet hose fastened with a multiplicity of tags.

She had a much lighter heart under the jerkin of leathern thongs that she travelled in from Domremy.

There is very little recorded of how Jeanne

d'Arc spent the four months of her tedious court-life after the repulse before La Charité. She took long and hard rides with a few of her people, and thus she visited many places up and down the Loire. She was in the habit of refreshing her strength, after her severe fatigues, by the constant use of vapour baths. Christmas-day she spent at Jargeau, and there she received the Eucharist, in company with Katherine of Rochelle, from the hands of Brother Richard. The preacher sought to reconcile the two sibyls, in both of whom he believed; but Katherine did not put out of her heart the malice she had conceived against the Maid. Jeanne could not enter cordially into any of her projects. Katherine was anxious now that the king should despatch her as his ambassador to treat for a permanent peace with Burgundy; but Jeanne, who knew how faithless Burgundy was, told her Charles would never find peace with him, save at the point of the lance; and the *tongue* was Katherine's weapon—the double tongue.

This bold adventuress had secured herself some patrons about the court, patrons who had it in view to diminish the Maid's importance, by raising her up a rival and competitor. She was now, and for long afterwards, regarded as a prophetess attached to the Armagnac party. But the only memorable and certain thing that she ever did, was to belie and slander Jeanne d'Arc.

In January early the Maid was again at Bourges, and thence she wrote to Tours a letter addressed to her old host there, Jean Dupuy, and the council, requesting that, for her sake, the city would give a little dower to the daughter of Heuves Polnoir, the painter of her Standard. A meeting of the clergy and magistrates was called, to deliberate on this letter; and it was agreed that, for love and honour to the Maid, and for honour to the painter's daughter on the day of her marriage-benediction, which was to be in February, a gift of wheat, and of red and white wine, should be accorded.

About the middle of the month, Jeanne revisited Orleans, where the people were hard at work restoring their ruined suburbs. In her company were her brother Pierre, the Sire de Mortemar, and two other gentlemen. She stayed only one day, and the city entertained her, supplying for two repasts six capons, nine partridges, and a pheasant, and fifty-two pints of wine—of the last certainly no stint.

The news of the war which came to the Maid's ears at this period, made her courtly trammels daily more irksome. The women who slept in her chamber revealed to her chaplain, how many a night she rose, and kneeling in the darkness, supplicated God for the king and kingdom of France. Whichever side won, while France was divided against herself, the poor peaceful people suffered.

The capital was sunk in the most profound misery. The royal troops ventured on their pillaging excursions up to its very gates. La Hire took Louviers, an important town of Normandy, by escalade, with only six hundred soldiers; and establishing himself in that stronghold, rode often within sight of Rouen, sweeping off booty right and left as he went. These were the things that wrung Jeanne's heart with grief and compassion.

The Duke of Burgundy was too busy now to distract himself with the troubles of either Paris or his English allies. He was celebrating his marriage with the Princess of Portugal at Bruges, in the midst of such pomp and magnificence as had never been seen in Flanders before. Six distinguished French knights, of whom Poton de Saintrailes was one, had gone down thither, by favour of the truce, to break a lance at the tournament which was to conclude the wedding festivities.

Reports of these gaieties arrived at the court, mingled with heavier tidings—tidings of Saint-Dénis attacked and plundered by night, and the Picards of the Burgundian garrison nearly all massacred by the king's soldiers,—cruelty that would surely entail reprisals at the first opportunity. The small towns of the Isle-of-France changed hands constantly, and at each change underwent a fresh pillage.

The truce was kept in this fashion through Feb-

ruary; and early in March, Charles went to Sully, the Maid accompanying the court. There several councils were held, the sole result of which was, that the king would still rest from pursuing his war as long as possible.

Jeanne d'Arc suffered between the apathy of Charles and the incessant urging of that imperative *voice* in her heart and in her ears, *Go on, go on*, may be faintly conjectured from the catastrophe that ensued; and finished the conflict. Rank and honour, favour and praise, could not hold her against that divine command: nor love nor reverence for the king. She fled from the court.

Winter was then nearly over; the truce had expired, and the great armies of Burgundy were again on the march, to join the English in the re-conquest of the cities that had sworn obedience to Charles. The Maid was still at Sully with the king, when the inhabitants of Rheims wrote to her of the great peril and terror in which they lived. She answered them:—

"My dear and well-beloved, whom much I desire to see, Jea[illegible] the Maid has received your letters, making mention of how you fear to be besieged. Know that you shall not, if I can stay your enemies; and if I meet them not, and they come against you, shut your gates, and I will shortly be

with you, and drive them so hard that they shall not know whither to betake themselves. I write no more to you now, but to bid you be good and loyal. I pray to God that He will have you in His keeping. Written at Sully the sixteenth day of March.

"I could send you some other news that would gladden you much, but I fear that the letters might be taken on the road, and that my news might be read. JEANNE.

"To my very dear and good friends, the clergy, citizens, and other inhabitants of the town of Rheims."

Only twelve days had elapsed after the date of this letter, when the Maid had to reply to a second from the disquieted city—disquieted now by traitors within, as well as by enemies without.

"My dear and good friends, be pleased to know that I have received your letters which make mention of how it has been reported to the king that there are in the good city of Rheims many disloyal persons. In truth it has been so reported to him, and that there was a league to betray the town, and bring in the Burgundians. But since the king has learnt from you for a certainty that it is not thus, he is contented with you, and you may believe yourselves in his grace; and if you have need,

he will succour you in your siege. I know well that you have much to suffer from your adversaries, those treacherous Burgundians; and, please God, I will deliver you from them as soon as ever I may. And I beg and pray you, very dear friends, that you will guard your city well for the king, and keep good watch. You shall hear very soon of my good news more plainly. Nothing else will I write to you now, but that all Brittany is French, and the duke is to send the king three thousand combatants paid for two months. To God I commend you: may He have you in His care. Written at Sully, the twenty-eighth day of March.

"To my very dear and good friends the clergy, sheriffs, citizens, and masters of the good town of Rheims."

From scenes that had passed between Charles and the Maid before, may be imagined with what pleadings she would assail him now, when a city which had shown itself very generous to both, appealed to her for protection twice within the space of a fortnight. On her knees and with tears must she have adjured him, that for his honour he would either march himself, or send her with an army sufficient to relieve and defend the unhappy people who had returned to his obedience. Her failures, attributed, perhaps, and justly, to the manœuvres of men who envied her, had not shaken their confidence in either

her power or her goodwill. But there was Georges de la Trémouille whispering at the king's other ear about those mischances, and the risk of trusting her again; and old Raoul de Gaucourt and the Archbishop of Rheims protesting that more might yet be done by negotiation than by force. Charles listened to them, and denied Jeanne's prayers. He would not join the war in person, nor would he give her leave to join it.

Meanwhile the year to which Jeanne had often expressed a presentiment that her labours would be limited, was lapsing fast. The hours and the days slipped by. She saw and heard all that the king and council proposed, and were likely to do, for the recovery of the kingdom, and there was no hope in it. Her heart was almost rent in twain. Her devotion to Charles was second only to her devotion to God—was a part of her religion. How could she defy and disobey him? Now must have been multiplied the cruel vigils of the night, when the women in her chamber heard her weeping and praying for him and his people. Now must have been renewed that bitter struggle between natural duty and submission to her *voices*, that she underwent before her flight from Domremy. And the result was the same.

One day at the end of March, while Brother Richard was in Orleans preaching the Lent sermons, she mounted her horse, and rode away from

Sully with all her people—Jean d'Aulon and her chaplain, Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulangy, and her faithful brother Pierre, and her company of guards, as if only bound on some frolic. But night came, and no Jeanne. She was gone—gone without leave of the king, without farewell to him, and was far on her way to the parts where the French were making a good fight against the enemy.

She never saw Charles's face again. She left him in sorrow, in a grief and depression that did not wear off. Presentiments of disaster haunted her mind, and one day about the middle of April, being at Mélun, on the ramparts alone, she heard her *voices* whispering that before midsummer she would be taken. From that hour the warning was continually reiterated; and though she told none of those about her, and went forward to the scene of the war, and took her share in every risk and toil and danger, she no longer assumed the task of commanding the men, or the responsibility of planning any expedition. And her incessant prayer to God was, that when she should be taken, she might soon die, and not suffer a long captivity in the hands of her adversaries.

Did she know then, that beyond the Loire, she had left no friend who would pay a ransom for her, or try a rescue?

XIV.

THE LAST CAMPAIGN, AND THE CAPTURE OF THE MAID.

FROM Mélun, in her foreboding mood, Jeanne d'Arc proceeded to Lagny-sur-Marne. Soon after her arrival there, she was asked to go and visit a child of three days old, which lay unbaptized, and to all appearance dead, but which its mother thought was really in life. Jeanne was told that the maidens of the town were going to pray for it in the church, before the altar of the Virgin, and she was invited to accompany them. She went, the infant being brought thither too, and the priest in readiness to baptize it, if any sign appeared of the soul being yet in its little body. After some time spent in prayer, the baby yawned, and yawned, and yawned again, and a natural colour came into its face, while the priest signed it with the cross, and admitted it into the Church of Christ.

Then the tiny flicker went out quite; but its mother was comforted with the assurance that its angel was in heaven, and that its dust might rest in holy ground. Jeanne went her way, lingering neither to weep nor to rejoice with the others; but when she was gone, they said it was her prayers God had heard—for love of her He had raised the child.

The Maid seems to have made her head-quarters during this, her last campaign, at the castle of Borenglise, between Compiègne and Ressons; but she was perpetually on the march, and moved so swiftly from place to place, that the enemy never had any certainty of her whereabouts until they saw her. She was, however, very well known to be with the royal army, and daily desertions from the ranks of the English were the result. The terror of her had rather increased than diminished, and the proclamations against the captains and soldiers who forsook their colours, and refused to come into France to fight for fear of her, were at this moment in full force.

Jeanne's first notable exploit during this campaign was not calculated to reassure them. While still at Lagny, she had news of three or four hundred archers and men-at-arms advancing through the Isle-of-France, under the command of a redoubtable Burgundian knight, Franquet d'Arras, to make a foray on the border towards Lagny. Jean Foucault, the governor, drew out his garrison to support the

Maid and her company, and with a few Scots under Hugh Kennedy, they went in quest of the foragers, who, at their approach, drew up in close order to receive their attack. It was made with vigour, and an obstinate engagement began, the combatants being nearly equal in numbers; but the end was a victory for the Maid, and the capture of Franquet d'Arras, followed by the surrender of all his men who were not taken before or slain.

The Burgundian captain was carried into Lagny, expecting to be ransomed as a prisoner of war; and Jeanne proposed to exchange him against a man of hers who was a prisoner in Paris. But Franquet, in his ravagings, had broken the laxest rules of Christian warfare over and over again, and was regarded by the populace and peasantry throughout a wide district near the capital as the worst scourge that could be let loose upon them. The civil authorities in Lagny assured Jeanne that he was not entitled to the rights of a prisoner of war, and demanded that he should be brought to trial for his notorious crimes. The baillie of Senlis came to Lagny to officiate as judge, and after an examination which lasted fifteen days, Franquet, having confessed himself traitor, murderer, and thief, was condemned to be beheaded as a common criminal. Meanwhile, Jeanne's man had died, and the baillie, representing to her that justice would be defrauded if the Burgundian captain were let go,

she consented to his death—a consent that was afterwards charged against her as a capital offence.

The defeat, capture, and execution of Franquet d'Arras occasioned intense excitement in Paris, where, only a few days before, had been discovered a plot for delivering the city up to the royal troops. Amongst the conspirators were some ecclesiastics, counsellors of Parliament, great merchants, and others, down to poor workmen. The expiration of the truce between Charles and Burgundy hurried it forward too fast, and it was betrayed—none ever knew how. A Carmelite, Pierre Allée, who had been one of the chief emissaries of the affair, was seized and put to the torture. Under the agony he revealed the names of a great number of his accomplices. Nearly a hundred and fifty were arrested; others escaped by flight. Four of the leaders were beheaded, two were quartered, some were drowned, and some expired under torture. Thus violently was that peril stamped out. The executions took place in Easter-week, not without making many bleeding hearts in Paris; but scarcely a fortnight after, the dominant faction were assembling by crowds in the churches to sing *Te Deum* for the arrival of the little English king at Rouen, whence he was to come to the capital, as soon as he safely could, to be crowned King of France.

From Lagny the Maid proceeded to Senlis, and thence to Borenglise. Her next move was to Compiègne, a most important place, because it was the key to the Isle-of-France. The Duke of Burgundy had just opened the campaign in person by laying siege to the castle of Choisy-sur-Aisne, which commanded it. Choisy was held by Louis de Flavy for his brother Guillaume, governor of Compiègne. Two excellent captains, Saint-Saveuse and Jean de Brimeu, guarded the faubourgs of Noyen, and some English soldiers under Lord Montgomery had charge of the passage of the river at Pont-l'Evèque, to hinder the French in Compiègne from intercepting the supplies sent to the army before Choisy.

Poton de Saintrailles, who had joined the Maid with a considerable force, proposed to compel Burgundy to raise his siege; and one morning before dawn, they marched down to Pont-l'Evèque, and fell on the English by surprise. They had almost gained the bridge, when Saint-Saveuse, roused by the clamour, hurried up to the succour of his allies with a stout body of Burgundians. The French were not strong enough for an encounter with the new comers, and Saintrailles advised a return to Compiègne, which was accomplished. But a day or two after, to compensate for this repulse, he took prisoner Jean de Brimeu, as he was marching through the woods, near Crépy-in-Valois, with a

hundred men-at-arms, to join the Duke of Burgundy at Choisy.

The attack on Pont-l'Evèque having failed, it was proposed to march round by Soissons, and try to drive the enemy to a battle, which might lead to the relief of Choisy, now hard pressed. The Archbishop of Rheims, the Count of Vendôme, and several other commanders, came from Beauvais with a strong force to share in the expedition, and at the end of April, accompanied by the Maid, the army presented itself before Soissons. But at Soissons, treason had been at work, and the gates were shut in their faces. The Count of Clermont, whom Charles had placed in charge of that city, had gone his way to some more peaceful territory of his own, leaving a Picard, Guiscard Bournel, to keep it in his absence. Guiscard Bournel had just negotiated the sale of it to Burgundy, and was only waiting to admit Jean of Luxembourg and his men. Instead, therefore, of finding welcome, rest, and a passage at Soissons, the royal army found rumours of the enemy coming up in force; and were obliged to retreat, from the difficulty there was of subsisting in that impoverished part of the country. The Archbishop of Rheims, and the captains who were of his prudent mind, considered it necessary to retire towards the Loire. The prelate and the Maid had a disagreement on this point. Jeanne thought the

policy he advanced cautious to cowardice; he thought her rash, wilful, and deaf to good counsel. The consequence was, that they parted company; and, deserted by the greater part of the army, Jeanne took refuge in Compiègne, giving utterance to some stern menaces of what she would do to the traitor Picard who had brought about this serious check and quarrel, if ever she caught him.

Treachery was the Maid's fear, her only fear, and it seems to have come upon her very strongly at this time. One morning she went to the church of St Jacques to hear mass, confess, and receive the Eucharist. Numbers of the inhabitants flocked thither also, when she was known to be there. In the throng were a hundred or more young children, who were very eager to behold her. Two old townsmen of Compiègne, who were amongst them, used to tell it as a memory of their youth, that the Maid, when she had ended her prayers, withdrew herself into a quiet spot over-against one of the pillars of the church to meditate, and be alone; and seeing the little creatures still standing about, watching her, she bade them go and pray God for her; telling them she should soon be delivered to death, and should have no more power to serve the king and kingdom of France.

The loss of Soissons precipitated the fall of Choisy. The garrison, seeing no hope of relief, offered to capitulate, and give up the castle, on

condition that they should march out with their arms and goods. These terms were accepted, and as soon as the French were gone, the fortress was razed to the ground. The Duke of Burgundy then set his men to work to throw a bridge across the Oise, by which to carry over his artillery, near Montdidier, to Compiègne. His design was now to lay siege to that favourite city, and he proceeded to take up his position against it with great diligence. His own quarters he made at the castle of Coudin, only a league from the walls, and his nephew, Jean of Luxembourg, camped a little nearer, at Clairoy. Another Burgundian commander was sent to take possession of a post at Margney; and the English, under the Earl of Suffolk, the Earl of Arundel, and Lord Montgomery, were lodged in the valley towards Venète.

His plan of the siege formed, Burgundy sent into all parts of his dominions to enlist more soldiers. They did not come with the alacrity he anticipated. The men of Flanders and Artois were as reluctant to serve against the Maid as the rustics of Kent; not, perhaps, so much because they were afraid of her, as because they had a lurking faith in her divine mission; they did not love their English allies, and they feared that it might be an impiety to resist what she announced to be the will of God for the pacification of their distracted country. The Picards, however, were

ready to run wherever there was a chance of fighting and plunder; and of them and others Burgundy mustered enough to open the siege of Compiègne early in May.

Such tidings of the Maid as were sent to the court by the Archbishop of Rheims, after the affairs of Pont-l'Evèque and Soissons, could not fail to rejoice the hearts of all who had envied or wished her ill. It was evident that good-luck had abandoned her. The manner of her departure from the king had aggrieved him, and had given his confidants the opportunity of injuring her in his esteem, and also in the esteem of the people—an opportunity which they improved to the utmost. Another advantage was presently thrown in their way, which they seized, and used with suspicious alacrity. A shepherd-boy came out of the country of Gevaudun to the king, exhibiting blood-stains, which were said to be like the miraculous wounds of St Francis. Georges de la Trémouille took him under his patronage, and the boy, who was part knave, part fool, and part dupe, being thus encouraged, went on to declare, "neither more nor less than what Jeanne had done;" adding that, if Charles would send *him* against the English and Burgundians, they would be discomfited to a certainty. The audacity of the new prophet's invention won him disciples forthwith.

While this miserable rival was being exalted to displace the Maid, and while rumours of him were being circulated to prepare the people and the soldiers for his advent, intelligence arrived that Compiègne was besieged. Word of the wonderful shepherd-boy was despatched to the Archbishop of Rheims, who had returned to Beauvais, and his story was received by the prelate for gospel. The poor dupe shortly followed his report; but before he could be put forward publicly, to measure his pretensions against the Maid's achievements, the Maid's destiny had worked itself out, and her place in the field was vacant for any who dared aspire to fill it.

Jeanne's *voices* reminded her often and often that her capture would be before the feast of St John; but the presentiment did not weigh down her intrepid spirit, or for an instant tempt her into evading the risks of her duty. She seemed, indeed, to grow more venturesome as her hour drew near, striving to crowd into the little time that was left her, the good work that might have been finished, if none of her time had been wasted.

On the eve of Ascension-day, she was at Crépy-in-Valois—the place where she had once expressed a wish to die, and be buried. She had with her only from three to four hundred soldiers. The situation of Compiègne had then become perilous; and though her men were unwilling, being so few,

to attempt passing near the host of the besiegers, she determined to go to the relief of the town; answering their objections in her old hopeful, confident tone—"By my Martin, we are enough! I will go and see my good friends in Compiègne." What she dared, her few faithful followers could no longer decline.

About midnight, Jeanne rode out of Crépy with her company, and a little before sunrise entered Compiègne, without the enemy giving her any hindrance, or being apparently aware of her arrival. She was in one of her most exalted moods that day, ready to dare anything. She concerted her plans with Guillaume de Flavy, with Valperga the Lombard, Jean d'Aulon, and one or two captains besides; and about five o'clock in the evening, she led a sally out by the bridge-gate, intending to descend on the camp of Baude de Noyelle, and drive him out of Margney, and then to fall on the Duke of Burgundy at Coudin. She carried her Standard, and was splendidly mounted and equipped, wearing over her armour a *huque* of scarlet cloth of gold.

At the hour when the sally was made, Jean of Luxembourg, the Sire de Créqui, and ten or twelve gentlemen besides, happened to be riding about the environs of the city, to spy the weak points of the ramparts for an assault. From a distance they recognised the conspicuous figure of the

Maid, sweeping down towards Margney, with a following of about six hundred men. They instantly raised a cry to arms in their quarters, and by the time the troops at Margney had succumbed to the impetuous attack of the French, more Burgundians came hurrying from Clairoy, three to one of the Maid's men. A furious fight ensued. Créqui was terribly wounded in the face, and twice the Burgundians were driven back to their tents by the rushing charge of the Maid. But their numbers multiplied every moment. The English arrived on the field from Venète, and were taking her company in the rear, when a soldier gave the alarm, crying to her, "Hasten to regain the city, or you and we are all lost!"

"Hold your peace!" replied Jeanne. "Think of nothing but falling on them; it depends only on ourselves to discomfit them."

But the flight had begun, and she was forced to follow—following, however, always the hindmost; charging back to cover the retreat, and doing her utmost valiantly to keep her men together, and save them from loss. The Burgundians, aware what help was on every side, pressed after the fugitives, and Guillaume de Flavy, in a panic lest the city should be entered by the enemy in the rush and confusion, ordered the drawbridge to be raised, and the gate closed. The Maid, seeing this retreat cut off, endeavoured to escape with her men into the fields

Picardy-way, but only those who formed her body-guard followed her, and she was soon surrounded. These faithful soldiers fought hard for her, and the Burgundians went on killing and killing to come at her, until at last, five or six together laid their hands, some on her, and some on her horse. She made a fierce wrestle for her liberty, but when she found it was hopeless, and that they were determined to take her alive, she surrendered to an archer in the company of the bastard of Wendonne, who belonged to Jean of Luxembourg's army. Jean d'Aulon and her brother Pierre surrendered at the same time, with the rest of her guard who had not fallen.

The lucky archer who had captured the Maid, bade her give him her faith.

"I have sworn and given my faith to another than you, and I shall keep my oath," replied Jeanne, and speaking these words she was led away to the quarters of Jean of Luxembourg.

A few minutes after arrived the Duke of Burgundy in hot haste from Coudin, and heard the great news. The English and their allies assembled from every quarter, and made the air ring again with their uproarious shouts of triumph and delight. To have captured the Maid was better than to have captured five hundred of the best fighting men in France; "for there was not a knight and not a captain of war in all King Charles's army whom, up to

that day, they had feared so much as they had feared the Maid."

So says Enguerran de Monstrelet, the Duke of Burgundy's secretary, who was with him at Coudin, and who accompanied him into Jean of Luxembourg's tent to see her. The duke spoke a few unrecorded words to her, and then leaving her in his nephew's guard for the night, returned to his own quarters to dictate a letter announcing the glorious capture to his subjects, the inhabitants of Saint-Quintin.

"By the pleasure of our blessed Creator, the thing has so happened, and such favour has been done us, that she who is called the Maid has been taken, and with her many captains, knights, and squires. Of this capture we are sure there will be everywhere great news, and the error and foolish belief of those who were favourably inclined to her, will be made known. We write you these tidings, hoping you will have great joy, comfort, and consolation in them, and that you will give thanks and praise to our Creator who sees and knows all, and who by His blessed pleasure deigns to guide most of our enterprises to the good of our lord the king, and the relief of his loyal and good subjects."

As the duke's messenger rode away north with this pious, prompt missive, the May night darkened over Compiègne in its sorrow and bereavement, and over the camp of England and Burgundy in its jubi-

lant triumph. If the Maid at Clairoy heard her *voices* when the *Ave Maria* rang in the town, or *prime* in the morning, it was no longer inciting her *to go on*, but encouraging her with courage, faith, and patience to *suffer* all; for this adversity was her Lord's will towards her, and He would never forsake her while she trusted in Him.

Jeanne d'Arc was kept at Clairoy for three or four days, Jean d'Aulon being permitted to attend upon her, and was then sent under a strong guard to Jean of Luxembourg's castle of Beaulieu in Vermandois. The brave gentleman to whose care the king had intrusted her, went with her, to serve her during the earlier months of her captivity as faithfully as he had served her in her days of honour and good fortune.

Then her people dispersed hither and thither; only her lieutenant, Barrère, and thirty-three men-at-arms of her company, staying at Compiègne to strengthen its garrison. And the news of her capture flew far and wide. At Tours there was a public mourning—all the clergy of the city and canons of the cathedral making a barefoot procession to supplicate God for her deliverance. But the king, his council and captains, safe beyond the Loire, might have been all charmed asleep for anything they did to accomplish it. The Archbishop of Rheims wrote from Beauvais to his troubled flock, to

lighten, if possible, their sense of the calamity that had befallen their beloved Maid, by convincing them that it was merited, and that their own loss was not so great as it might, at first sight, appear. He spoke of her as having refused to hear counsel, and as having in all done her own pleasure. He then informed them of the shepherd-boy, from the mountains of Gévaudun; recounted the good things he gave out for the king's cause, and concluded by letting them know that this improved seer explained the Maid's fall by asserting that God had suffered her to be taken because she was constituted in pride, because she had put on rich clothing, and because she had done her own will instead of what God commanded her.

This most atrocious letter from one of the king's chief ministers, may serve as a key to the treasons that had wrought the failure of Jeanne d'Arc, and to that total abandonment of her by Charles and his government which ensued upon it. All her works and labours of love that she had done, were already forgotten, or counted for nothing in the court; and amongst the people was set abroad the theory that God had abandoned her for her pride, her presumption, her pomp, and her disobedience. Her open enemies had but to go one step further, and to deny that God had ever had any part in her at all, and to declare that it was the devil who had been her helper and advocate from the beginning.

Clément de Fauquemberque thus notes the capture of the Maid on the register of the Parliament of Paris :—

"Thursday xxv. day of this month [May MCCCCXXX] Messire Louis of Luxembourg, bishop of Thourenne, chancellor of France, received letters from Messire Jean of Luxembourg, his brother, making mention, amongst other things, that on Tuesday last past, in a sally which the captains and men-at-arms of Messire Charles de Valois, being then in the town of Compiègne, made against the Duke of Burgundy's people besieging it, the soldiers of Valois were put to flight, and some of them who could not regain the town were left prisoners in the hands of Jean of Luxembourg's people. Amongst others, they took, and hold prisoner the woman whom the soldiers of Messire Charles de Valois called *the Maid*, who had ridden in arms with them, and who had been present at the assault and discomfiture of the English who kept the bastiles before Orleans, and the town of Jargeau, and other towns and fortresses."

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on 02 July, 2018